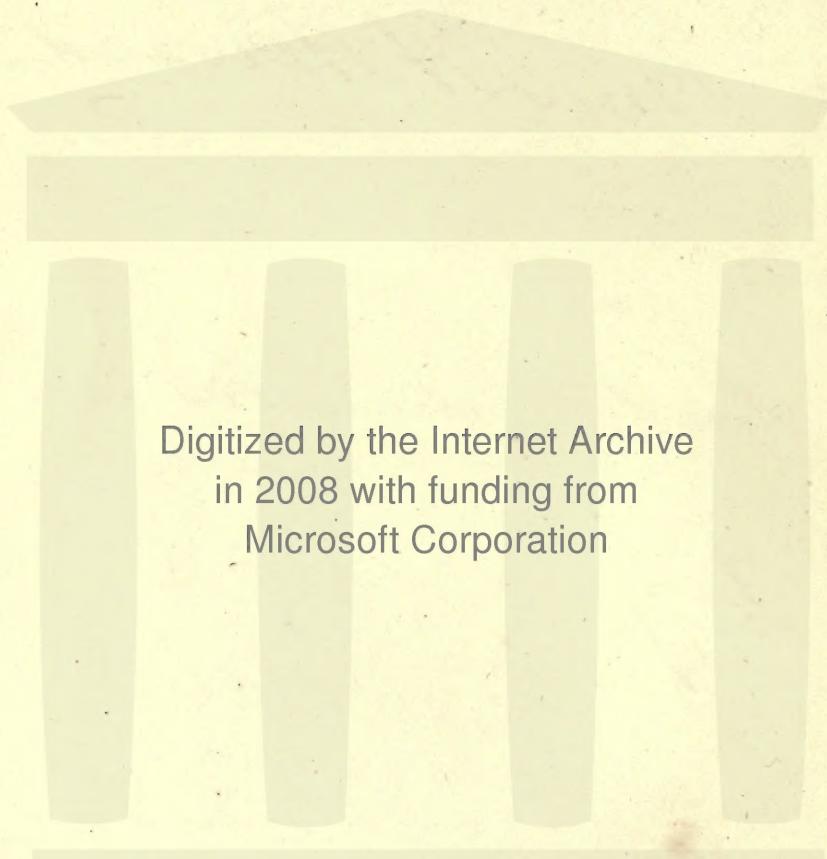


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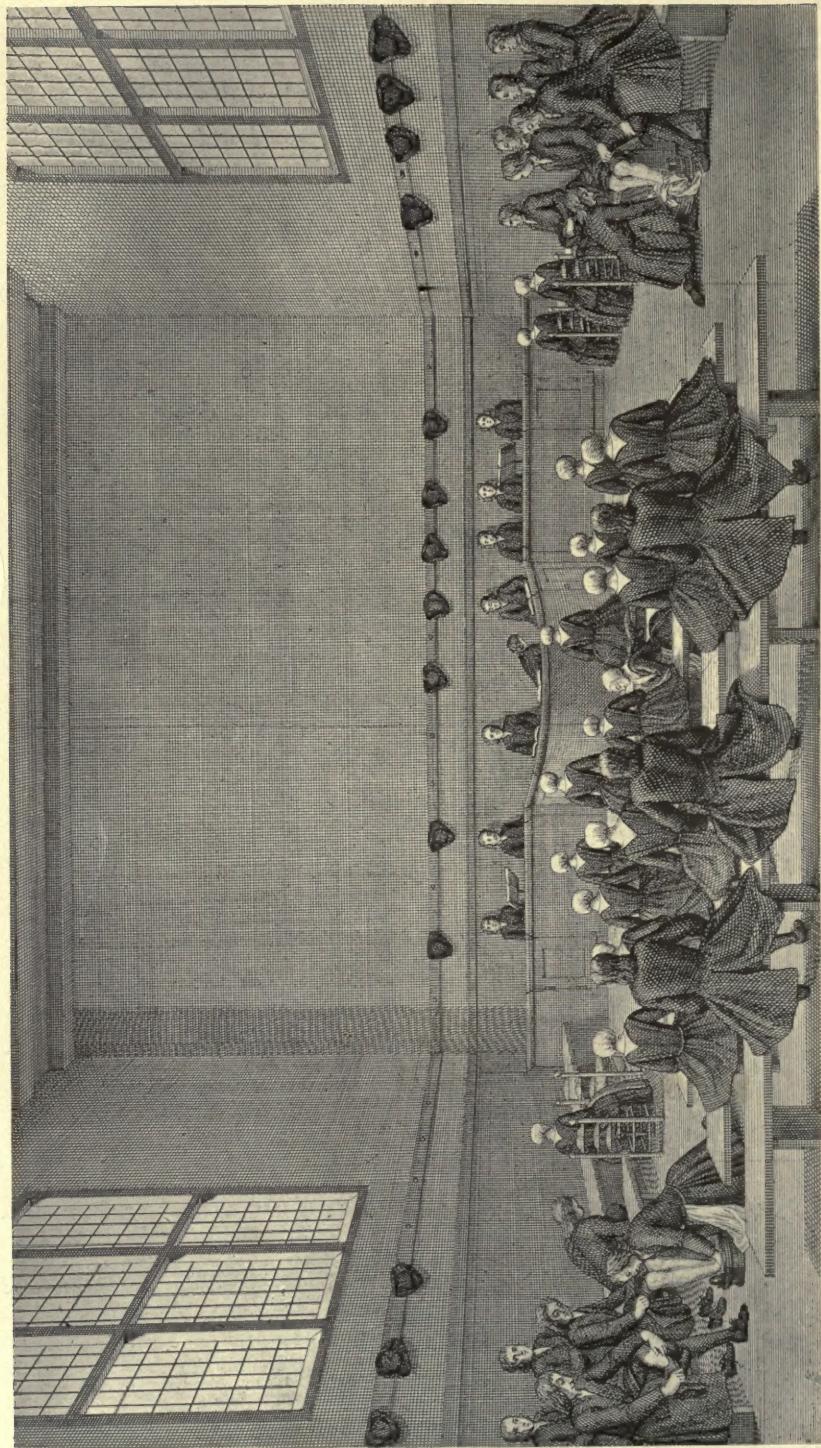
THE INNER LIFE
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH.

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COLLEGE HILL, CANNON ST.

DEACONNESSES.

THE ELDERS.

DEACONNESSES.



METING FOR WORSHIP OF THE OLD FLEMISH MENNONITES, AT ZAANDAM.

(The Ordinance of Washing the Feet of the Brethren and Sisters.—See John xiii. 14, 15).

THE INNER LIFE
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH:
CONSIDERED PRINCIPALLY
WITH REFERENCE TO THE INFLUENCE OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION
ON THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY ROBERT BARCLAY.

LONDON:
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXXVI.

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PREFACE.

FOR the last eight years the leisure of a busy life has been devoted to the collection and arrangement of the materials for this Work.

Some of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth have not hitherto been deemed worthy of an accurate and pains-taking study, others have had the history of the theological opinions or sufferings of their members in the cause of Religious Liberty fully told ; and all have been described rather in their political and external, than in their internal relations. It has been my aim, in the historical portions of this volume, to enable the people who are described, to tell us in their own words, what was the origin, the object, and structure of the Societies to which they belonged, and also to give a practical turn to the enquiry—how far the schemes of Church organization described in this volume have attained their real objects.

The present is irrevocably linked with the past—what we see—is the result of what has preceded it, to a greater extent than we are always willing to admit. The religious forces which were developed at this interesting

period of our history are far from being fully spent. The harvest of good or evil is not yet fully reaped.

The stand-point from which the subject has been treated, differs essentially from that of many other writers. The reader will, however, agree, that it is desirable to contemplate the religious history of our country from *all* the points of view which may tend to elucidate it. Some aspects of the history of the period may have their importance, and yet have escaped the notice they deserve, while others may be obscured by the mist of a prejudice which is merely the result of imperfect information.

Whatever treatment the history of the Christian Religion may receive from historians, and whatever may be the fate of Religious Societies, we may be sure (to use the words of one who suffered martyrdom * for his opinions respecting the constitution of a visible Church), that the smallest portion of "Divine truth is immortal; it may perhaps long be bound, scourged, crowned, crucified, and be laid for a season in the grave, yet the third day it shall rise again victorious, and rule and triumph for ever."

References have been clearly and copiously given to the sources of information which have been used in the preparation of the Work. Some of these are special and

* Balthasar Hubmier, born 1480, at Friedsburg, near Augsburg, burnt 1528, at Vienna.

original, and others have not hitherto (as far as I am aware) been drawn upon by any English writer. To acknowledge the obligations I am under to those who have most kindly and heartily assisted me, is not only a duty, but also a pleasure, and their names are placed below.

To the Heads of the departments at the British Museum.	To H. O. Coxe, Librarian of the Bodleian.
,, George Bullen, Keeper of the Printed Books in British Museum.	,, Librarians at the Guildhall Library.
,, Librarians of Lambeth Library.	,, Librarian of Dr. Williams' Library.
,, Librarians of Sion College Library.	,, Dr. F. Nippold, of Berne.
,, Henry Bradshaw, University Library, Cambridge.	,, Dr. C. A. Cornelius, of Munich.
,, John E. B. Mayor, M.A., of St. John's Cambridge.	,, P. A. Tiele, of the University Library of Leyden.
,, E. B. Underhill, LL.D., Editor of the Hansard Knollys Society's publications, for the use of his Library and MSS.	,, John Waddington, D.D.
,, Francis Fry, Esq., F.S.A., Cotham, Bristol, for the use of his valuable collection of Early "Friends" tracts, &c.	,, F. W. Gotch, LL.D., Baptist College, Bristol.
,, Thomas Goadby, B.A., Chilwell College, near Northampton.	,, Herbert S. Skeats.
,, Fielden Thorp, M.A., York.	,, J. H. Millard, Secretary of Baptist Union, Huntingdon.
,, Robert Barclay, Esq., Bury Hill, near Dorking.	" The Executors of the late W. Thistlethwaite, for the use of MS. Notes of Minute Books inspected by him.
,, The Authorities at the Record Office.	,, Stafford Allen, Esq., Stoke Newington, who joined me in arranging a special search for documents in the localities where the Society of Friends had its rise.
	,, J. Angus, D.D., Regent's Park College.
	,, A. Gordon, M.A., Norwich.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. J. G. de Hoop Scheffer, for his valuable information and help, and for the loan of books from the Library of the Mennonite College, and transcripts and translations from the archives of the Mennonite Church, &c., at Amsterdam.

Those who have kindly assisted me, who are not mentioned, and also the following Representative Bodies, will equally accept my thanks.

The Representative Committee of the Society of Friends, for the use of their unequalled collection of original tracts and other works, and for placing at my disposal their ancient and valuable collection of Records and Letters, particularly the Swarthmore MSS., a collection made under George Fox's direction, and most of them endorsed with his own handwriting. An addition to this collection has lately come into their hands.

These MSS., with two thick foolscap volumes of the same original collection of papers belonging to myself, added to the vast number of original Minute Books of the Society of Friends noted below, have placed in my hands advantages which have not been made use of to the same extent by any historical writers except Sewel and John Barclay (the author of "The Life and Times of Jaffray"), and A. R. Barclay, who published the "Letters of Early Friends" (the Author's father and uncle).

The Minute Books of the following County Meetings, comprising a mass of church records existing in an unbroken series through all their gradations, and linked with those of the Yearly Meetings at Devonshire House from the year 1669 to the present time, have been more or less thoroughly searched, and the results extracted systematically:—

The Meetings of London and the environs, Bristol and Somerset Monthly and Quarterly Meeting Records and Letters, with those of Dublin and Ireland, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Sussex, Surrey, Devon and Cornwall, Reading, &c.

A portion of the collection of the somewhat rare works of Caspar Schwenkfeld, dispersed in consequence of the death of Dr. Frederick Schneider of Berlin, opportunely fell into my hands. This placed within my reach important and accurate information respecting the life and teaching of this most estimable and extraordinary man—who, it will be seen, exercised a deep and powerful influence upon the development of the principles of the Reformation.

ROBERT BARCLAY.

REIGATE, 1876.

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INTRODUCTION.

A FEW years ago the writer was much impressed by some statements which came under his notice respecting the religious needs of London. He endeavoured by personal inspection to make himself acquainted with many of the various Christian Missions carried on in London. He also engaged in the work as far as his opportunities allowed.* While thus occupied he was deeply impressed by the fact that Home Missions not in connection with any Church, and without any system of membership, had few of those elements of success, vitality, and stability, which the direct efforts of Christian Churches to extend their borders and church system, seemed to him to possess.

London contains, according to the best statistical information we possess, about 850,000 to 1,000,000 persons who attend no place of worship. It may help us to form some idea of the want of success on the part of every section of the Christian Church in grappling with such a state of things, if we recollect that by comparing the *seat accommodation* already provided with the *persons fit and able to attend*

*He has pleasant recollections of Field Lane Refuge, and would commend this excellent institution to those who have personal service to offer.

worship in London, we find that if all the churches, chapels, and buildings devoted to public worship were filled to their last seat, there would be still left outside the buildings as many people as the whole population—men, women and children—in the cities of Leeds, Bristol, Sheffield, and Birmingham. As the writer walked at night through the narrow streets teeming with a labouring population, the question *how* this great city is to be evangelized, seemed to him to be worthy of something more than a moment's thoughtfulness or a passing sigh. It is difficult for any person who has not been engaged in the work to grasp the sad reality, of the utter inadequacy of the means now in existence to accomplish the end which is sought. The increase of the population is constantly outrunning the attempts which are made to bring the poor under the direct influence of Christianity, while the sum total of the irreligion caused by the neglect of the various sections of the Christian Church in times past, remains and increases.

The hearty co-operation of Christians of all denominations during last year in enabling two American Lay Preachers to address large masses of the London population, seems to shew that the desire, on the part of the Christian public, of influencing the irreligious classes exists, if the means of effectually doing so are to be found. The importance of the subject will be seen when it is stated that more than one-third of all the crime in England is committed in London. In this city 73,000 persons are taken into

custody every year, and 100,000 paupers are relieved by the poor law authorities every week.

The means at present in existence for the evangelization of London consist, first, of certain Societies employing paid agency, which are not *churches*, but which are intended to supplement the deficiencies of all churches; secondly, the Missions of individual Christians, who are often left to cope with difficulties which can only be overcome by united action; thirdly, the Home Mission agency of particular churches, the object of which is to remove the obstacles which exist to the direct action of these churches; and lastly, the work of Christian Churches in forming offshoots from the original body. This last method is seldom employed, except for the purpose of obtaining religious ordinances for those portions of the middle classes and the labouring population who already appreciate and are willing to bear the pecuniary burden requisite to obtain them. It is comparatively seldom that the degraded and depraved, or even the sceptical well-to-do artizan classes, are sought for as church members. We honour those Christians who go forth alone, sacrificing their time, their health, and the pleasures of their own fire-side, to preach the Gospel. Like John the Baptist, they are preparing the way of the Church of the Future. But there is about this isolated action a want of permanence. No organization exists fitted to supply the description of labourers they need to supplement their efforts, and to obtain and judiciously to apply

the needful funds. The zeal which commenced the work is not communicated to others; it is like a plant which does not succeed in propagating its species. This isolated action is most aptly compared by an eloquent writer to the "Red Cross Knight," "pricking forth alone in quest of adventures;" and he draws a contrast between this antique and picturesque method of seeking the foe, and the scientific organization of modern armies. He very justly remarks that the necessities of Christ's Church in the present day require that the warfare should be waged on somewhat different principles.

With regard to those societies which employ paid agency, they are worthy of the most hearty support, but their warmest supporters would themselves acknowledge that the necessity for them arises mainly from the imperfect manner in which Christian Churches have performed their duty. A vast army of voluntary labourers is needed, and these can only be supplied, in the case of London, by the zeal and earnestness of the members of the various churches in the environs. It is constantly asserted that the only thing which is lacking is this zeal and earnestness. The writer, on the other hand, believes that in every religious denomination, and probably in every congregation in the suburbs of London, there are a considerable number of truly Christian men and women who are fully capable of the self-sacrifice which such a service in the cause of their Lord and Master requires, but that, from a variety of circum-

stances, they are perfectly unable to create a sphere of action for themselves ; and that such is the nature of our religious organizations that they are found, *when fairly tested, unable to afford a place for every one who is willing to work in the service of Christ.* Enthusiasm and self-sacrifice soon die out when an adequate object, and the right means of accomplishing that object, do not present themselves. It is a mistake to believe that those who possess right feeling and right principle will always find a position of usefulness in the Home Mission field, and one in which they are fitted to excel. Men are impelled to make great sacrifices when they see the necessities of the work in which they are engaged, and their enthusiasm rises in proportion to the difficulties which surround them, if only they are in a position which holds out the possibility of accomplishing their object. Where there is one man capable of commencing home missionary operations alone in the Metropolis, or any of our large towns, there are a thousand who would work as patiently, and with equal success in proportion to their varied gifts, if they were kindly taken by the hand and shewn a congenial sphere of labour for their common Lord.

On further consideration of the subject, the author thought he saw a great difference between the various churches, in respect of their evangelizing power. It seemed to him that an examination of the question as to what tends to help and what tends to hinder, the exercise of the converting

and assimilating power which is inherent in the Christian religion, might be of advantage to other Religious Societies as well as to the Society of Friends, of which he found himself a member—positively without thought or choice, and simply by the accident of birth.

The internal history of *this* Christian Church, and certain other Religious Societies, seemed to him calculated to illustrate the subject. The Society of Friends exhibited in the early stages of its existence, an amount of energy and vitality which form an extraordinary contrast with its subsequent history. In the year 1700 it was a strongly organized and increasing church. It was probably as numerous, compared with the population, as the Wesleyan Society fifty years after the Wesleys had commenced preaching. The internal history of the Society of Friends possesses a special interest, because it is unquestionably the history of a great *experiment* in church organization. It advocated many great principles which, when first promulgated, were held up to the scorn of the religious as well as the irreligious world. The larger number of these have been insensibly adopted by other churches, because they were found to be in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of the Gospel. The extraordinary amount of misrepresentation and persecution which the Society of Friends received was borne with a patience and Christian fortitude which was equally extraordinary, and won for it the respect of its bitterest enemies. The part

which this church took at the period of the Restoration is now admitted to have had no inconsiderable influence in deciding the issue of the struggle which won for England “the priceless jewel of religious liberty.” In the fearful sufferings of those times, the testimony of the Society of Friends to the great principles which were at stake partook of the character ascribed to its founder. “It was as sound as a bell, and as stiff as a tree.” The history of the Christian Church hardly presents a more striking picture than the stand made by this Society, for the right of Englishmen to worship God according to their conscientious convictions.

In later times, it is not too much to say that the religious character of many of the members of this society, and their labours for the good of their fellow men, have commanded the respect of all the churches, and sincere regret has been expressed by prominent members of other denominations at their decline in numbers. In tracing the causes which led to this decline, the writer will endeavour to shew that the principles which led to the sudden rise and increase of this Society, are those which have governed and must govern every vigorous and increasing church ; and that the principles of church government which led to its rapid and almost unexampled decline in numbers, are such as offer a lesson of warning to other Christian Churches. The present position of the Society of Friends is that of just maintaining its numbers, and there are grounds for believing that a revival of religion is taking place within its borders, which,

if not overcome by the almost insuperable obstacles to church extension it has accumulated during the last 150 years of its existence, may eventually place it in the foremost rank of those churches who honestly add to their numbers by christianizing the masses of the irreligious population.

The original design of the founders of the Society of Friends—its position and stand point in relation to the Religious Societies of the times, its elements of strength and weakness, and the very reasons of its existence—have been, in the author's view, very inadequately understood. One of his objects has been to exhibit this Society as one of the *links* in the chain of *experiments in church organization* which were made at the period of its rise. He trusts, that however inadequately he may have treated the subject, he has succeeded in rescuing it from the narrow views;—of those, on the one hand, who regard the rise of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth as the mere outbreak of the wildest fanaticism, and of those, on the other hand, who have regarded the Early Friends as the apostles of a faith and of a church too nearly approaching a perfect form of Christianity, for continued existence in this evil world. The intelligent public will, the author believes, see grounds for believing that an intelligent adaptation of the ideas of George Fox to the religious needs of after times, might have more fully realized his idea of a *Working Church*, and might have been more richly blessed in supplying the religious needs of our labouring population.

The author trusts that he has succeeded in throwing some light, however small, on the mutual relations, the origin, and the religious practices of the Free Churches which sprung into existence during the period of the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth.

Great pains have also been taken to present to the reader reliable religious statistics, which will furnish him with a general idea of the success and vitality of some of the principal systems of church government in England and America.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE AND OBJECTS OF A VISIBLE CHURCH.

It is needful for us in this enquiry to have a clear view of the nature and objects of a church society. We are not here speaking of the Invisible Church to which all belong who are united by faith to Christ, the great Head of the Church. The *oneness* of the Church of Christ consists in our having ‘one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.’ We shall not discuss the question whether it was intended by our Lord that Christians should form one vast and far-reaching Society, because not only has experience shewn that such an attempt to produce an outward uniformity is a failure, but every year tends to shew that the oneness of which our Lord spoke, was a oneness which is in perfect harmony with “diversities of administration,”* which gives free scope to a variety of means of effecting the one great object, and consists in our having *One Spirit*. The whole analogy of the supply of the common wants of man-

* 1. Cor. xii. 5. “And there are variety of ministries,—appointed services in the Church in which, as their channels of manifestation the *χαρίσματα* would work—“but the same Lord” (Christ the Lord of the Church whose it is to appoint all ministrations in it). These *διακονίαι* must not be narrowed to the Ecclesiastical Orders, but understood again commensurately in extent with the gifts which are to find scope by their means.”—Alford’s Greek Testament (in loc.)

kind shews that the gifts and talents of men are best exercised on this principle.

When Christianity appeared in the world, those who viewed it in its external development called it a "Sect." The Apostle Paul was called by Tertullus "a ringleader of the *sect* of the Nazarines;" and the Jews at Rome spoke of the Christian Church as a "sect which is everywhere spoken against." Precisely on the principles upon which we may feel sure the Apostle Paul would have defended the church at Rome—as a society whose origin was the result of an effort to follow more fully what they believed to be the whole revealed will of God—so any particular society of Christians in the present day may shew that they are *no "Sect,"* for where the "Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Surely history has shewn us sufficiently clearly that the attempt to form churches on the principle of securing, at all cost, *uniformity*, has been the source of endless bitterness and divisions; while a liberty, which is the result of Christ's spirit, has tended to produce unity, harmony, and a co-operation in the same object, which is a substantial pledge of the oneness of the true church.

It is (as Archbishop Whately remarks) a striking proof of the superhuman wisdom which guided the writers of the New Testament, to find that they give us no directions for any special form of outward church government, or worship, or society. Still, the *principles* which must govern the societies called churches are not obscurely dealt with in the New Testament. Men were gathered by the Apostles into outward societies, often very small in number, e.g. the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, in the house of Philemon, of Nymphas. These too were *organized* societies—even before the Day of Pentecost an organized

society had been formed whose names were enrolled to the number of 120, and who exercised the functions of a society, may be seen from Acts i. 15-26; and as they increased in numbers they required a larger amount of organization. That they considered themselves as members of an organized society is evident from Acts vii. 1-6. The Apostles ordained elders in every city; there were to be those who bore "rule," and those who "submitted" themselves. Christ was the "*chief shepherd*," but still there were to be *under shepherds*, who were to act in His loving authority. Religious differences between brethren were to be told (in case they could not settle them privately) to "the church," and if a man neglected "to hear the church" he was to be to the Christian as "a heathen man and a publican." The church was to be built of living stones, mutually supporting each other on the foundation Christ Jesus; and there could be no *Christian communion*, although there might be the most friendly intercourse in all the relations of daily life between the believer and the "infidel."

But what the church should be is summed up in the great principle that "The Church" is His body. The relation of the members of the human body to the head, and the mutual relations of the members of every part of the highly organized whole, shews the dependence of the church upon Christ, and the diversity, yet perfect harmony, which exists among the members, if they are all aiming to carry out the *great purpose* of that head. *Every member* has an *office*; every part, larger or smaller, is one with the body; and every individual member is a representative of the body, precisely as any one member of a plant or animal belongs to that species of plant or animal and no other, and has, so to speak, an identity of its own, just as a single

feather from the tail of a humming bird, is sufficient, we are told, to *mark* the species from which it has fallen. Again, every member of the body has a freedom of action peculiar to its own sphere, but it is nevertheless beneficially *governed* by certain other members.

The Church is compared to a flock, an army, a kingdom. There are no flocks without shepherds; no armies where men are indiscriminately privates and officers; no kingdoms where rulers and subjects are convertible terms. No worldly society could be regulated on such a principle. The analogy which the human body would seem to suggest, is that of a freedom of the various members—a government which is felt to rest its authority upon the supply of certain *needs* of the subordinate members, and these again minister to the needs of those exercising higher functions, *both* receiving benefits which are *perfectly reciprocal*. A Christian may be really united to the Church universal, in a desert, or a prison; but who will venture to say, that because Christ there supplies all His need without human means—religious *isolation* is Christ's ordinary method of doing this? If a Christian voluntarily forsakes the appointed channels of Divine grace and help, which are described in the New Testament as only existing in connection with a Christian Society, will he remain a member of Christ's mystical body? Who will venture to say that a Christian is performing all his duties, as described in the New Testament, if he does not seek the communion of the saints; if the establishment and comfort of the Church members is a matter of indifference to him; and if he does not do his part, however small, in assisting in the propagation of the Gospel?

It remains to be shewn how these ends can be effectively accomplished without outward means and organized

societies.* We shall endeavour to exhibit, in the historical part of this volume, the practical results of a Church virtually abrogating this function of a Christian Society.

We cannot doubt that this constant allusion in the New Testament to general principles, and not to details, was intentional, and that the object was to prevent Christians from attaching to outward institutions any *inherent sanctity*, and to lead them to be willing to *adapt* their plans of working to the needs of human nature, and the times in which they live, by continually asking how far any institutions they may adopt conduce to the outward development of those holy desires and good purposes which the Great Head of the Church is continually raising in the hearts of the true followers of Christ, but which can be effectually thwarted by the arrangements of a Church Society in such a way as to prevent their practical application. Man has been created with a faculty for combining in societies, and

* This has been attempted by Mr. Henry Dunn, in a book entitled "Organized Christianity," Simpkin, London, 1866. Mr. Dunn considers that the propagation of the Gospel is not within the province of a Church, and he has maintained, we think, with more ingenuity than success, that the "entire absence of any organization for aggressive purposes was the great peculiarity of the primitive Church." Mr. Dunn seems to us to prove too much. His application of Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, as a command applying to the Apostles only, shows how nearly "extremes meet," and strengthens the Romanist theory of an "Apostolical succession." In a subsequent work he feels bound to show *how* Christianity is to be perpetuated, and suggests a plan which would speedily assume the aspect of a gigantic organization for the evangelization of our large towns. Mr. Dunn appears to us to take for granted that because certain Church organizations have done their work very imperfectly, and great evils have been found to exist in connection with them, that *no other plans will succeed more perfectly*. Considering how little change has been effected in the organization of Christian Churches, and how little the philosophy of Lord Bacon is thought to be applicable to these matters, it seems unreasonable to suppose that no change for the better will be effected. Because men once rode in stage coaches, it was no reason for thinking railway travelling an impossibility; and because no "flying machine" has, as yet, been successfully constructed, it would be very rash to assume that either the principles or the materials are lacking in nature for its construction.

is able, by the exercise of a purely human intelligence, to contrive special applications of the general principles we find in the New Testament which relate to the constitution of a Christian Society, precisely as he adjusts from time to time the machinery of a Society having secular objects. Therefore, although the Church may be called a Divine Institution, any of its particular arrangements cannot be called so except so far as they actually accomplish the revealed will of its Founder, and serve the purposes for which Christianity exists, and for which Christ died.

The great leading principle expressed in the New Testament, is that the Church is "His Body." All the members of the Church have *some* office. True it is that "the Body without the Spirit is dead," but it is equally true that *the Spirit without the Body* cannot effect its desires and aims. We are "workers together with God," and when we refuse to be so, we *frustrate* those loving purposes which God has towards our race—purposes which He designs to accomplish by human instrumentality. The elaborate machinery of a steam-engine is useless without the motive power; but without this machinery the steam will not accomplish the object which is designed.

There seems in the present day to be a growing spirit of impatience of the avoidable and unavoidable defects of Church Government. It seems, too, to exist side by side with a strange indisposition to make the needful effort to correct and remove those things which are obviously at variance with the great general principles laid down in the New Testament. It must be admitted that this indisposition does no honour to Christianity, and causes *the purity of the motives* of its professors *to be suspected* by the irreligious world.

There is also, in some instances, a curious objection to adopt measures in harmony with those fundamental principles

of human nature which men very carefully consider in the structure of any Society intended to carry out a purely secular object. Is it not, therefore, possible to conceive that there are defects in *the machinery* made use of in Church Societies which injure the cause of Christ? May it not be antiquated, cumbrous, and ill-adapted for its work? May not this reasonably account for the fact that the proper amount of work is not got out of it? To carry out the illustration still farther, is there not a disposition among Christian men to cry out for *more "steam"* than *is given to us*, without inquiring whether, in our *application* of the supply which *is* furnished, we are obtaining the full amount of its power?

It seems obvious that the object of every Society is not *mere* existence, but to secure certain ends. The object of the Church has been defined by a most able modern writer in these words: “The Christian Church is that Divine Institution for the Salvation of man which Jesus Christ has founded upon earth. The object and end of the Church is that the salvation wrought out by Christ should be communicated to, and appropriated by, every nation and every individual. Outwardly the Church manifests itself in the religious fellowship of those who, having become partakers of this salvation, *co-operate* in their own places and according to the measure of their gifts and callings towards the extension and development of the Kingdom of God. Christ, the God-Man, who is exalted to the right hand of power, is the sole Head of the Church; the Holy Spirit who is sent by Christ in order to guide the Church to its goal and perfection, is its Divine Teacher.”* The preaching of the Word, the study of the Holy Scriptures, the reception

* See Kurtz's Church History, Introduction.

of the believer, baptized by the Holy Ghost, into the household of God—the visible Communion of the Saints,—are some of the outward means by which the Holy Spirit works in and by it.

If this definition of the visible Christian Church be a correct one, the objects and ends of a Christian Church (a society linked or not with other societies) must be, first, to promote the growth of grace in its members; secondly, to carry forward the work of the Gospel on a plan in which all, as members of Christ's Body, can lovingly unite. Surely various outward Church Societies may exist, all having the same objects. The Church is His Body, and the differences of constitution, and organization of various religious Church Societies, is no proof of schism or sectarianism. They, too, may be all members of His Body. These differences of organization are an unmixed good, so far as they are efforts to attain in this way, a *unity* and agreement in *practical working*, which, as the world is constituted, could not be otherwise obtained. If, on the other hand, it can be affirmed truly that this is not their object, but that it is to separate Christian Brethren who are one in Spirit, and to incite them to attack and despise each other, such Societies are an unmixed evil, and, although they may be called Christian Churches, they have no claim to be called so. The Army of Christ may have different battalions, but as long as they act under the orders of their one great Head—if there be subordination to Him in the several divisions—real and substantial unity may exist. It may only be our ignorance of the military art which induces us to long that they may be formed into one vast phalanx. If they are animated by one great object—to fight against the common foe—we may be sure that they will all be made use of by their great Captain.

In discussing the organization of individual Churches, and the various relations between distinct Church organizations, the great fundamental principle which must govern us is that "the Church is His Body." As in the human body, the relations between the groups of members is *more distant*, while the relations between the various parts of the smaller members is more close and intimate. All that the various existing Churches require to bind them more closely together is greater earnestness in the two great objects of the Church of Christ, viz., the evangelization of the world, and the development of a nearer approximation to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ in their individual members. They must both go together, for the first aids in the development of the second, and this reacts on the first. Active effort in the evangelization of the world, is to the Church what exercise is to the human body, the members cannot enjoy health without it, they will disagree and not work harmoniously. If the health of the individual members is maintained by exercise, if all are aiming at the same great object in sympathy and in unison, an intelligent subordination and harmony will enable the body to perform miracles of strength and endurance, and thus carry out far more fully the object of Christ its Holy Head. We shall now proceed to inquire what were the reasons which induced Christian men to establish in England a variety of religious organizations.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURSE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1640. THE RISE OF THE BAPTISTS, THE PRESBYTERIAN AND ANGLICAN PARTIES IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, THE FAMILISTS, AND BROWNISTS.

IT is impossible to take a correct and reasonable view of the opinions and practices of any of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth, unless we endeavour clearly to understand the causes which led, first, to the temporary abolition of Episcopacy and the overthrow of the Established Church, and, in the second place, how certain religious opinions were gradually formed; which produced, as their practical result, the English Presbyterian party, the Independent and Baptist Churches, and the Society of Friends.

George Fox commenced his ministry in the year 1648, and therefore our subject will lead us to look both backwards and forwards from this historical standpoint. We shall endeavour to trace how, under the excitement of the stirring events of the time, certain phases of religious truth were preached in every part of the United Kingdom, principally by "lay" or private persons, and produced an outburst of religious activity and energy which has always been regarded with some degree of astonishment.

The Society of Friends was the last religious society formed during the extraordinary period we are about to

contemplate, and those facts which explain its relation to other religious societies, will be found to throw considerable light on their internal history and mutual relations. Considerable obscurity rests upon the history of the religious societies of Commonwealth times, from the fact that each Church was "independent." The internal history of the Society of Friends is more clear and connected, from the fact that it was the first free Church formed in England which was not "independent," but connexional in its character. In subsequent chapters we shall shew the structure of this Church, the difficulties experienced by its founders, the changes which took place in its constitution, and its consequent decline in numbers.

It is, however, of the utmost importance to have a clear view of the origin and the distinct character of the religious opinions of the persons who are termed "Puritans,"* and to distinguish them from those of the people called Separatists, Brownists, Barrowists, Johnsonists, and afterwards Independents and Congregationalists; and those again who are termed Anabaptists or Baptists. This is the more needful, because most of these names were invented in order to hold up to public ridicule three important and distinct lines of religious thought, and to some extent, of religious practice; and they have thus been, too successfully, confused under the common idea of a factious opposition to the reformed Church of England.

As we shall afterwards shew, the rise of the "Anabaptists" took place long prior to the formation of the Church of England, and there are also reasons for believing that on

* The word "Puritan" is used throughout this volume in its original meaning, viz., of a person who desired the reform of the Church of England in a Presbyterian sense. The application of the word (since the ejection of the 2000 Puritan ministers from the Established Church in 1662) to *any* Nonconformist, has led to serious misconception.

the continent of Europe small hidden christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the "Anabaptists," have existed from the times of the Apostles. In the sense of the direct transmission of Divine Truth, and the true nature of spiritual religion, it seems probable that these Churches have a lineage or succession more ancient than that of the Roman Church.* The question is, however, rather interesting as an obscure historical problem, than important in a Christian point of view. It must also be borne in mind that the continental Baptist † societies which sprang into vigorous life in the time of Luther, were "Independent" churches. But in England, although traces

* In the year 1140, one Enevinus, "the humble minister of Steinfield" in the diocese of Cologne, addressed St. Bernard for instruction as to the manner in which certain heretics were to be treated. "They also confess that besides the baptism of water they have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire." He mentions some among them who denied the dogma of transubstantiation, made void the priesthood of the Church, denounced the Sacraments, baptism only excepted, which is administered to adults. They claimed antiquity for their doctrine, and that "it had been hidden from the time of the Martyrs." I am indebted for this interesting quotation to a MS. sketch of the History and Literature of the Baptist Denomination previous to the year 1700, by Dr. Underhill. These were the Catharists, and Neander says they abstained from swearing, their yea and nay being a substitute for the strongest attestations. They had a membership of "auditees" and "perfects," and cared for their own poor. The rise of the Waldenses, according to Dr. Pius Melia, took place at Lyons in 1170, certainly not earlier than 1160 (see pp. 2 and 5, "Origin of the Waldenses," London, 1870), and it is obvious from Dr. Melia's own authorities that the *Waldenses asserted* that their Church had its origin prior to Peter Waldo, and that Father Moneta, in the year 1244, challenged them to prove the fact, and Brother Reinerius, also writing in the year 1250, distinctly states that "some people say that it (the sect of the Leonists) has endured from the time of Silvester, and some say from the time of the Apostles," although he does not give any approval to the assertion. The refutation of Jean Legers' misrepresentations, Dr. Melia furnishes, and other evidence from Waldensian MSS., &c., is most valuable and important.

† These Baptist Societies, the readers must bear in mind, were not *immersionist*. The Unitarian Baptists at St. Gall, in Switzerland, about 1527, seem to have been the first who used baptism by immersion. They afterwards took refuge in Poland. See p. 75 of this work; also, J. Kessler's *Sabbata*, a MS. reprinted by the Historical Society of St. Gall, with Cornelius' *Geschichte von Münsters Aufruhr II.*, pp. 32, 33, 36, 37, 64.

are found in our history of the existence of the *opinions* of the “Anabaptists” from the earliest times, and particularly subsequent to the time of the Reformation, it is doubtful whether any *churches* or *societies* of purely English Baptists had a distinct *consecutive* existence prior to 1611. In 1536, however, certain Baptist Societies in England sent a deputation to a great gathering of the Anabaptists near Buckholt, in Westphalia. As remarked by Bishop Burnet, the “Anabaptists” between the period of the Reformation and this date were principally Germans, who were driven by the troubles on the Continent to find refuge in England.* It is stated by Governor Bradford, of New England, that† the first Separatist or Independent church in England was that of which “Mr. Rough was pastor, and Cuthbert Symson a deacon, in the time of Queen Mary,” when they were burnt by Bonner. The church book containing the names of the congregation was left with Simpson’s wife, and, although Mr. Rough was three times placed on the rack, he would not discover either the book or the names. Prior to 1571 a Separatist Congregational Church was formed of which Richard Fitz was pastor, and Thomas Rowland deacon. A Mr. Bolton was one of the “elders” of this church.

The Puritan party also had its rise in the reign of Queen Mary, and consequently prior to the final sanction of the

† New England Memorial, p. 347.

* [Strype’s Parker, p. 287.] Many natives of the Low Countries, however, exiled by religious persecution, had settled in Norfolk and Suffolk as early as 1560. A sect arose in the diocese of Ely, many of whose tenets were incompatible with any (then established) form of church government, and resembled those of the Anabaptists and the “Friends.” Fuller, in describing a congregation of Dutch Anabaptists, says that the “English were as yet free from that infection.” But it is worthy of notice that the abjuration of certain members of a congregation of Dutch Anti-pædobaptists, shews that some of the distinguishing views of George Fox relative to oaths, &c., were held in England in 1575, viz.; “that it is not lawful for a christian man to take an oath; and of the

constitution of the Church of England by Parliament. The Reformation of the Church was confessedly not completed in the reign of Edward VI., and the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. When the sanction of Parliament was asked in 1571 to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England (which were in January, 1562-3, only agreed upon

unlawfulness of all war."(a) [Crosby Vol. I., p. 68.] Even prior to this a public instrument made in 1530, May 24th, in an assembly of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Durham, and others, by order of King Henry VIII., containing divers heretical erroneous opinions, &c., we find the view stated of the unlawfulness of all war, by a people who held that Jesus Christ "hath not ordeyned in his spirituall kingdom—which is all trewe cristien people—any sworde, for He Himself is the King and governour without sworde and without any outward law. Cristen men among themself have nougnt to do with the sworde, nor with the lawe, for that is to them nether nedeful nor profitable. The secular sworde belongeth not to Crist's kingdom for in it is noon but good and justice. Criste saith that noo cristien shall resist evil nor sue any man at the lawe." "Concilia Magnæ Britannie et Hibernie" à Wilkins, 1738. [I have been favoured with this quotation by the kindness of E. B. Underhill, LL.D.] Henry VIII., in 1539, mentions the foreign Anabaptists in a proclamation. These views and the provision for their own poor may be taken to prove the connexion of this class of Christian people from 1530 to 1600, with the Dutch or German Anabaptists.

(a) I annex the form of recantation, which has been furnished me by the kindness of Mr. T. V. Bayne, of Ch. Ch. Library, Oxford :—

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

1575.

THE FORM OF RECATANTION PRESCRIBED TO CERTAIN ANABAPTISTS.

Whereas I, N. N., being seduced by the spirit of Error, and by false teachers, his ministers, have fallen into many damnable and detestable Heresies, viz., first—*That Christ took not flesh of the substance of the blessed Virgin Mary.** 2. *That infants born of faithful parents ought to be rebaptized.* 3. *That no christian man ought to be a magistrate, or bear the sword, or office of authority.* 4. And, *That it is not lawful for a christian man to take an oath.* Now by the grace of God, and through conference with good and learned ministers of Christ His Church, I do understand and acknowledge the same to be most damnable and detestable heresies, and do ask God, here before His Church, mercy for my said former errors; and do forsake them, recant, and renounce them from the very bottom of my heart. And, further, I confess that the whole doctrine and religion established in this Realm of England, as also that which is received and practised in the *Dutch Church* here in this city, is sound, true, and according to the Word of God, whereunto in all things I submit myself, and will most gladly be a member of the said *Dutch Church* from henceforth, utterly abandoning and forsaking all and every *Anabaptistical Error.*

Copied from MS. in library of Ch. Ch. Oxford, Arch. W. Misc., 21, p. 849.

* This shews that these Anabaptists were the followers of Melchior Hofmann. See B. N. Krohn's Geschichte, Leipsic, 1758, pp. 820 to 822. He says that the celebrated David Joris had travelled from Strasburg to Vlieszingen in Seeland, with the purpose of proceeding to England, and met three Anabaptists who had escaped. He therefore decided to remain in the Netherlands.—See note, page 88.

by convocation without alteration in a Puritan sense by a majority of *one vote*), the House of Commons declined to adopt the thirty-sixth and the other articles relating to the hierarchy and ritual of the Church.* This shews the purely political character of the Puritan movement. It concerned the things of religion, but it remained from this period to the accession of Charles II., true to the one idea of substituting by constitutional means, a Presbyterian form of State Church for the Anglican. The division of the Church of England into the Puritan, and what may perhaps be termed the Anglican party, took place at Frankfort in 1554.† The reforming party were driven into exile during the reign of Queen Mary. Some went to Geneva, others Basle, Embden, Wesel, Strasburg, and Zurich. At Frankfort they were most numerous. A congregation was formed which was allowed to meet in the French church; it was agreed that they should not quarrel about ceremonies, but, at the desire of the magistrates at Frankfort, subscribe the confession of faith, and establish the discipline of the French Protestant Church, which was virtually the same as that afterwards called Presbyterian. The celebrated John Knox was sent for from Geneva, and two other clergymen from Strasburg and Zurich, and were elected their ministers. They used King Edward's prayer-book in part only, omitting certain ceremonies, the litany, and responses. John Calvin supported them in this course. The English divines at Strasburg sent Grindal and Chambers with a pressing letter exhorting them to full conformity. Dr. Cox, who had been tutor to King Edward VI., coming to Frankfort,

* Dr. Toulmin's Edition of Neal, 1837, vol. i., p. 123, and "Waddington's Congregational History," p. 4.

† A brief discourse of the troubles begun at Frankfort in the year 1554, about the Book of Common Prayer and Ceremonies, 1575.

broke the agreement previously entered into, interrupted the service, and eventually persuaded the majority of the church to follow the same course, and to forbid John Knox to preach, and, by shewing to the magistrates certain passages in a book of his, reflecting on the Emperor of Germany, compelled him to flee to Geneva. This party was reinforced by considerable additions from England, on which the old congregation went to Geneva, where they were welcomed, chose Knox and Goodman as pastors, and set up what was called the Geneva Discipline. The struggle, in which the Puritans were defeated in Queen Elizabeth's time, and in which they were partially successful in the time of the Commonwealth, was substantially the establishment in England, by the authority of Parliament, of the Geneva Discipline as carried out in Scotland under John Knox.* The English Puritan party, throughout their history, bore the character and stamp of men trained in the school of John Calvin, who may be considered as the originator of the Presbyterian Church. According to Calvin the whole body of the people were the Church; where two or three were gathered together there was a Church; but the system of Calvin eliminated the *voluntary* consent of the two or the three thus gathering, and forced, under heavy penalties, the ungodly and the unbeliever into the Church. The officers of the Church were Ministers, Doctors, or Teachers, Lay-Elders, and Deacons who formed the Consistory or Church government. The people were admitted to the right of exercising a veto upon the appointment of officers. The Church was co-extensive with the State because it embodied every citizen, and every citizen was subject to the discipline

* For the influence exerted on the English Church by John Knox, see Dr. Lorimer's "John Knox and the Church of England." H. S. King, London, 1875.

of the Consistory. The censures of the Church were carried out by the sword of the State. The constitution of the theocracy established by Calvin, embodied in its most perfect form, the union of the Church and State, and it is one of the most curious studies in history. Calvin's object was to found a state resembling that of the Israelites under Moses, and the result was one of the most fearful ecclesiastical tyrannies to which mankind has been subjected. The discipline of the Church was carried out with a severity in which the gentle influences of christianity can hardly be traced. Spies or watchmen were appointed to report even the conversation of the citizens, and the Consistory had power to examine all the citizens, without respect of persons, on the tenderest point of conscience. To impugn Calvin's doctrine or the proceedings of the consistory, subjected persons to banishment on pain of death. The well-known case of Servetus, a learned physician of Unitarian views, simply illustrates the ordinary features of the theocratic government founded by Calvin, carried out to their extreme results. He escaped from the prison of the Inquisition only to be burnt alive at Geneva. The influence of Calvin upon the Protestant Churches of Europe was very great. Geneva sent forth into all parts of Europe apostles of a new school. It united the stern principles of the Mosaic economy with a purely intellectual view of the Christian religion. It substituted for a priesthood, Ministers, Lay Elders, and Deacons, giving to them the semblance of popular approval, and the most crushing oligarchical power. The school of Calvin grasped clearly certain important points of Christian teaching, but it cannot be contended that Christian love, without which the Apostle Paul declares all other Christian gifts are nothing worth, was the principle which governed Geneva

when Calvin exercised an influence in Church and State more powerful than that of the greatest of the popes. The power of Calvin's system over that of any previous Protestant reformer's, consisted in a greater logical consistency. It freed protestantism from all dependence upon human tradition. It sought to bring every sphere of life under the rigid rule of a church which claimed exclusive possession of the truth, and was prepared to maintain its position in the field of argument. It therefore suggested to Protestant princes a speedy and powerful method of reform. The use of christianity as a means of strengthening the secular power seemed to be illustrated by the example of Geneva. Calvin's system, while it secured outward conformity, contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction. At first it appeared to be fully successful, but the history of Geneva and of New England tell us how lamentably this system of Church government failed in promoting the true religious interests of the people. At the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth the clergy of the Church of England were principally Roman Catholics. They passed resolutions in convocation that authority in things ecclesiastical belonged only to pastors in the Church and not to laymen.* The Act of Supremacy,† entitled, "An Act for restoring to

* See Articles agreed upon in Convocation in 1558, referring to Strype's Annals. Oxford Edition, i., 41, 81; Fuller, ix., 55.

† The Act of Supremacy of Henry VIII., constituting the King's Majesty "Supreme Head of the Church of England," and giving the Crown "full authority to visit, repress, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend all errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities which, by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction, ought to be reformed, repressed," &c., was forced on the whole body of the clergy under the penalty of outlawry. To acknowledge a layman to be the head of an ecclesiastical body was, in their opinion, such an absurdity that they could not yield to it in the first instance without the clause "as far as is agreeable to the laws of Christ." The King accepted this for the moment but obtained the consent of Parliament and convocation shortly after to its omission.

the Crown the ancient jurisdiction over the State, Ecclesiastical and Spiritual, and abolishing Foreign Power," passed in 1559, controverted this declaration of the independence of the Church, and made Elizabeth supreme governor in all spiritual and ecclesiastical things and causes. The Act of uniformity passed at the same time re-established King Edward's prayer book, and the Queen was empowered by it to ordain and publish such further ceremonies "and rites as may be for the advancement of God's glory, and the edifying of his Church, and the reverence of Christ's holy mysteries and sacraments." Elizabeth was in favour of the old popish rites and ceremonies, and restored the Romish clerical vestments, which were allowed by King Edward's first liturgy to remain in use. It was with great difficulty that her bishops dissuaded her from retaining the use of images. By the Act of Supremacy the Church was linked with the State. This Act of Queen Elizabeth's reign has entailed on our country greater evils than either tongue or pen will ever be able adequately to tell. But it was a thing done in opposition to Roman Catholicism, and was considered as absolutely essential to the maintenance of the Protestant religion. We can well account for the attachment of Elizabeth and the Stuarts to Episcopacy. All the instincts of a hierarchy are on the side of arbitrary power. This single Act has more or less swayed the politics of England from that day to this. Whenever the fate of political parties has hung in the balance, the under current of opposition to this disastrous union, has turned the scale or materially affected the course of events. By the Act of uniformity, "he who ventured to address his Maker publicly in other language than that of the Book of Common Prayer, was liable to the loss of goods and chattels for the first offence, to twelve

months' imprisonment for the second offence, and confinement for life for the third offence." * The State was made protestant by Act of Parliament. The clergy (under the degree of M.A.) were compelled to buy a New Testament for their own use, in Latin and English, with paraphrases. Two or three discreet persons were to be appointed in every parish to see that all the parishioners went to church on Sundays and holy days, and bowed at the name of Jesus, under heavy penalties. Every parish was to provide a Bible and one of Erasmus's paraphrases upon the Gospels in English,† and to set them up in every church. There was at first great dearth of education among the clergy, and many had but little ability beyond that of reading well. In the year 1562 the Queen printed the Homilies "anew," on the ground that all which be appointed ministers have not the gift of preaching sufficiently to instruct the people which is committed unto them.‡ The clergy and people had the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Homilies again placed before them, and thus found themselves, by this summary process, members of the Reformed Church of England. To use the words of the martyr Barrow, "All this people with all these manners were in one day, with the blast of Queen Elizabeth's trumpet—of ignorant papists and gross idolators—made faithful christians and true professors." The ranks of the clergy were rapidly filled by

* Price's History Noncon., vol. i., p. 138.

† "Item, payd for a boke callyd the 'Paraphras of Erasmus,' vs.," p. 67. See Church Wardens' Accounts, St. Michael, Cornhill, printed for private circulation by A. J. Waterlow, Esq., from 1563 to 1607; also p. 176, date 1587, "Paid unto Mr. Sadlor for avoidinge of an excomunicaō for *not having* in the church a 'Paraphrase of Erasmus.'" The book is then bought and paid for in the next entry. [This is a most interesting reprint.—Ed.]

‡ The Homilies were published by Edward VI. in 1547.

able and learned protestants, many of whom had fled from the persecutions under Mary. It was impossible under these circumstances for the clergy to read their Testaments, and to have any knowledge of the principles and practices of the continental Protestant Churches, without coming to the conclusion that if England was to be a Protestant country in the face of so large a portion of the old Roman Catholic element in both clergy and people, the Reformation must go farther than Elizabeth was inclined it should go. Hence the spread of the great Puritan movement; and it is important to notice the points which were at first objected to by the Puritan party. The copes, surplice, caps, and gowns worn by the Romish clergy were objected to. Absolute conformity to the ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, saints' days and holydays bearing the name of a creature; the sign of the cross in baptism; kneeling at holy communion (which was associated with the worship of the Host); the introduction of organs in churches, and the singing of psalms by a choir, or by a part only of the congregation, instead of the whole and distinctly; the introduction of the cathedral mode of worship, of singing their prayers, and of the antiphon or chanting of the psalms by the two sides of the choir in turns. All these were matters objected to.

The great struggle in Elizabeth's reign was between that party among the clergy who objected to these things, and the bishops nominated by the Queen for the purpose of maintaining them. Elizabeth was determined to have uniformity of practice and discipline in the church, and her resolve to enforce the ceremonies was seconded by a succession of archbishops with a rigour and cruelty worthy of the Romish Inquisition, and by a variety of enactments enforced by this Queen's almost despotic power. The

Puritan movement in the reign of Elizabeth was one in which the clergy were chiefly concerned, although it had a large number of supporters and sympathisers among the nobility and gentry. Knox had visited Scotland in 1555, and took his final departure from Geneva in 1559. Elizabeth supported the reformation in Scotland by force of arms, and, from the year 1560 the jurisdiction of the Court of Rome was renounced, and the Church was remodelled by a commission of which John Knox was a member. They adopted the Geneva plan, but appointed superintendents, instead of bishops, to plant and erect churches, and appoint and oversee ministers. The superintendents were to be chosen, or deprived by the ministers and elders of the several provinces. The assemblies of the Kirk were divided into classical, provincial, and national—the national assembly being the last court of appeal. The result of the severities of Elizabeth in England, seconded by her prelates (who soon made ample use of the power with which she invested them), was to leave large numbers of the most learned and able of the clergy without means of support. They therefore travelled up and down the kingdom, preaching where they could obtain hearers, taking for their support what was given them. They received both temporary and permanent shelter among the nobility and gentry. Protestant principles continued thus to spread, and also the objection to the ceremonies. The setting up of the Presbyterian form of Church government in Scotland, and the constant communication between the most learned of the Puritan clergy and the celebrated Protestant divines on the Continent, combined with the relentless persecution carried on by the prelates, had the effect of emboldening the Puritan party, and some of their leaders petitioned Parliament, and met secretly at Wandsworth in conference, to

frame a model of Presbyterian Church government on paper,* to elucidate their object with a view to submitting it to Parliament. The question was mooted, " May the ministers proceed to the work of Church reformation without the assistance of, or tarrying for, a magistrate ? " † and it appears that the question was distinctly answered in the negative. They now objected not only to the ceremonies and the matters above mentioned, but generally to the ecclesiastical constitution of the newly established church. They objected to the arbitrary power of the bishops in the spiritual courts, to the want of a godly discipline, and to the promiscuous access of all persons to the Lord's table. The Church was described in the articles as a " congregation of faithful persons," and they thought that power should be lodged somewhere to inquire into the qualification of such as desired to be of her communion. They objected to the responses in the church service—to the words, " with my body I thee worship " in the marriage service ; to the words in the burial service, " in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life ; " to the use of the apocryphal books ; to the appointment of " dumb," or non-preaching ministers ; to the fact that the presentations to the livings were in the hands of the Queen, the bishops, and lay-patrons, instead of the people ; to the use of " godfathers and godmothers " in baptism ; to the custom of confirming children as soon as they could repeat the Lord's prayer, thus entitling them to receive the Lord's supper before they came to years of understanding ; to the practice of the bishop laying his hands on the children in confirmation, and the idea of its sacramental efficacy. All these which may be termed practical objections, were additional points

* Waddington's Congregational History, p. 6.

† Ibid., p. 11.

beyond those first raised. There was, at first, no difference in doctrine betweeen the conformists and the Puritan reforming party. The principle of coercion in religious matters by the State was admitted by both parties: the objection to it was, that it was exercised excessively or upon the *wrong side*. The principle of the endowment of religion by the State was admitted by both parties—this was not a matter which troubled the most uneasy Puritan conscience.*

The leader of this section of the Puritans was Thomas Cartwright, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Lady Margaret professor of that university. Cartwright was expelled from the university and went to Geneva. After his expulsion he wrote a defence of the address of the Puritan party to the Parliament, and maintained that the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles “had no foundation in law, but was an act of sovereignty fraught with the utmost peril.”† He maintained a controversy with Whitgift, from Geneva, and this greatly tended to diffuse the Puritan views, which now came to be identical with those of the Presbyterian Church established in Scotland. In the year 1571 the ministers of the town of Northampton, with the consent of the bishop, the mayor, and the justices, instituted the celebrated “prophesyings.”‡

These “prophesyings” were exercises framed on the pattern of the assemblies of Corinthian Christians, according to the apostolic rule, that “all may prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all be comforted”—1 Cor. xiv. 1-3.

* Neal 1, chap. 5, p. 159. Marsden, Early Puritans, p. 239.

† Dr. Waddington's History, p. 7.

‡ These were not novel religious exercises to the Puritan section of the Church—at Frankfort, according to the “*olde discipline in the citie of Franckford*,” “prophesie” was to be “used every fortnight *in* the English tongue for the exercise of the said students, and the edifying of the congregation.”—See “History of the Troubles,” &c.

Crowds of laity attended them. At first laymen were permitted to take a part in these exercises, but after a time, in consequence of some irregularities, the clergy alone exercised their gifts. A president was chosen. The first minister began and ended with prayer, and explained a text of Scripture previously chosen. He was followed by another minister, who added what he thought deficient, or explained what seemed to him obscure, and was followed by a third—the first not occupying longer than three quarters of an hour. The whole was conducted with the greatest solemnity. These exercises increased the number of able preachers, and fostered in the people a spirit of inquiry and of Biblical research. They spread through the kingdom with great rapidity, but, in spite of the earnest support of the venerable Archbishop Grindal, who remonstrated with Elizabeth in a letter full of earnestness and christian feeling, they were ordered in 1577 to be suppressed. Grindal never afterwards regained the favour of the Queen, and death removed him from the scene with a conscience void of offence toward God in the matter.

Elizabeth shewed that she possessed the spirit of her sister Mary, by burning alive, in 1575, two Dutch Anabaptists, John Wielmacker and Hendrick Ter Woort, out of a congregation of thirty who had assembled for worship in a private house in Aldersgate, and; although Fox the martyrologist interceded for them, she was immovable.

The “Family of Love,” or Familists, came into notice about this time. The name of their founder was Henry Nicholas or Niclaes.* He was born at Münster, in West-

* The first preacher sent by Niclaes we have notice of, was Christopher Vitells, a joiner, who came from Delph to Colchester in the reign of Queen Mary, in 1555. He ultimately recanted.—“Strype’s Annals,” vol. ii., part ii., pp. 284 to 286.

phalia, in 1502, and founded this extraordinary secret religious Society between the years 1541 and 1590. It has been for many years a puzzle to English historians. The researches of Dr. Nippold, of Emmerich,* have however thrown much light upon the history of its founder, its character and organization. The title assumed of the "Family," or "House of Love," afforded a ready topic of abuse. Mr. Marsden says, and we think justly, that "the insinuation of immorality is utterly without support." We will first mention those facts respecting this Society which are generally known to English historians. In 1580 a proclamation was issued by Queen Elizabeth against them, in the strongest terms. She resolved not only to have their heresies severely punished, but to "root them out from further infecting of her realm." They have been supposed hitherto to have been a Protestant sect, and one of their peculiarities was that they attended the religious services either of the Church of England, or in foreign countries, of ✓ the Roman Catholic Church, without scruple. They refused to criminate themselves by oath, and escaped punishment except when taken at their private meetings. They presented a supplication to James I. which was published at ✓ Cambridge, 1606, in which they complain that many of them have been cast into prison, and beg the king to judge of them by the christian rule, "Ye shall know a tree by its fruits." They say they utterly disclaim and detest all the disobedient and erroneous sects of the Anabaptists, the Brownists, the followers of Penrie, the Puritans, &c., and that his Majesty is under a great misapprehension of them. With the Puritans they say they "have nothing in common."

* In his monograph on H. N. and the House of Love, published in the *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie*, 1862.

"They," the Puritans, "are for pharisaical, self-chosen, outward traditions, rather than for the performing of judgment, mercy, and faith, and such like true and inward righteousness." They agree with all the Holy Scriptures as we do understand them. The end of all Henry Nicholas's writings, say they, is "that all people, when they hear, read, and do perceive their sins estranging from God and Christ, might bring forth fruits of repentance and newness of life, according as the Holy Scriptures require of every one, and that they might *in that sort* become saved through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the world." Their books are of a very mystical character, and all bear the same stamp of a belief in a prophetic inspiration which supplements or supersedes the Scriptures; and in the new revelation granted to Henry Niclaes. The reader of the works of the Familists has to seek their doctrines in a wilderness of vague and high-sounding words. He gropes his way like a traveller in the mist, and is only here and there rewarded by a gleam of something which seems like sunlight. He soon finds it to be a delusion, and again and again he plunges into the darkness. The result of our examination has however been, that they maintain the doctrine of the fall and the satisfaction for sins made by Christ,* but add that "our recovery from the fall and the repentance or satisfaction for our sins, must have another performance and fulfilling than many men suppose." "Now if all (as you say) should be fulfilled or satisfied, then I conceive nothing should be wanting in God's work,

* The first exhortation of H. N. to his children, and to the Family of Love. London, 1665, p. 11. "They love not God, but are such as hate him and contemn his law and word, account the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that cleanseth and saveth **our** souls, for impure, and disdain his salvation." ✓

and all things must be restored to his right form.” “And, seeing that there is yet defect therein, therefore I ask where doth the fault lie (in God or in us) that the work of God and his will is not performed in all, on us, and in us, and that *not* the righteous and the good life of Jesus Christ, but the sin and the death reigneth and hath dominion over us. For methinks that the right ground of this is *not yet* by *any entered into or understood*, and that the most necessary part of our godliness in Christ Jesus, and the obedience thereto which God requireth of us through His Son Jesus Christ, is still to be *performed by us and in us.*”* They taught that Christ came to reinstate man in the state he was in before the fall, and that man came by means of the Spirit of God into unity with God, and not merely when he was dead, but that man was called while on this earth to shew forth his glory, and that the end and fulfilment of what is written respecting Christ was love.† We shall recognize in this passage the teaching of something resembling the doctrines of “sanctification and perfection” as taught by Fox, and later by John Wesley, and which were becoming greatly obscured or wholly lost sight of in the teaching of the Puritan or Presbyterian party. The teaching of the Familists is described in a list of the opinions said to be expressed in 1579 “by them in conference, by those who talked with them,”‡ although some of these articles are denied by Theophilus, one of them.” Article 3.—“That those preachers which do take in hand to preach the word of God before man be regenerate (*i.e.*, before they are them-

* Mirabilia Opera Dei. Brit. Museum—no title—probably 1574.

† “Grundliche Berichtungen,” 1549. See pp. 482 and 484 of Nippold’s Paper.

‡ A confutation of certain articles delivered unto the “Family of Love,” by W. Wilkinson, M.A. Dedicated to the Bishop of Ely. Dated 1579. Brit. Museum.

selves regenerate) do take the office of the Holy Ghost out of his hands." Article 4.—"That those that be doctors or learned, cannot preach the word truly because Christ sayeth it is hidden from the wise and prudent." Article 16.—"When there is contention *there* is not the Spirit of God." Article 20.—"That the Bible is not the Word of God, but a signification thereof, and the Bible is but ink and paper, but the Word of God is spirit and life." Article 22.—"That there are some which are now living which do fulfil the law in all points." It is important to notice* that the Familists held that the law of God, in the Ten Commandments and the New Testament, was binding on Christians. It has now been found that the Familists cannot be termed a Protestant sect. Henry Nicholas had no sympathy with Luther and the Reformation. He had, he said, "read Luther's writings, but they had not pleased him, both on account of their reviling the *priestly office* of the Church, and also because the ground of true righteousness, and the fulfilment of godliness in Jesus Christ, was not taught in them, and also that the common people were not *reined in* with a good and godly discipline." "People," he said, "who were outside the Family of Love, threw away the Romish services and ceremonies much too soon." These were the figures and symbols of true christianity. "The Reformers brought in *other* services, but got little love and righteousness by it, and did not understand the value of the figurative services of the Romish Church!" These ceremonies were only practised in right form by those in whom Christ dwelt. The "House of Love" and the "Service of

* Dr. Nippold considers the tendency of their views to be Antinomian, but we do not find in their writing any such bias, and he does not furnish us with evidence sufficient to show that this was the practical effect of their teaching.

Love" was the reinstatement of the Kingdom of God, and was the "fulfilment of all forms and figures." The whole of the movements of the Society which Nicholas founded, were conducted with the utmost secrecy. They have, however, received a full elucidation in two manuscripts discovered at Leyden,* and the revelation which they furnish of the elaborate hierarchy which this enthusiast attempted to perpetuate, proves that his sympathies lay with Roman Catholics, and that, on the belief in an extraordinary revelation made to himself, he attempted to spiritualize and to fulfil what he deemed to be the hidden meaning of the Roman Catholic church, and to found a new society. His idea being, that the last and final dispensation was the perfect union of humanity with God, expressed by "Love," as the highest state of Christian perfection.

The services and ritual of both the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches were approved for all those persons who had *not* come into the new and higher dispensation which had been revealed to the prophet, and were indifferent for his disciples, who were free to use or disuse them. The admission of members was thus ordered: No person younger than thirteen years of age could be a member. If desirous to become members, they were first to "confess" their "walk in life" and "the inclinations of their hearts," to one of the *Elders*. He then pronounced them Members, desired for them the power of the Lord, with a solemn "Amen." He then warned them to be true to the "Service of Love" and to further the word of grace and true righteousness before God and men.

In the Order of the Priesthood there is an interesting

* The "Cronica des Hüsgesinnes der Liefden," and "Acta H. N.," in the Library der Maatschappij van Nederlandsche Letterkunde at Leyden.

parallel between the “House of Love” and the Roman Catholic hierarchy. At the head of the whole community stood the “Highest Bishop.” Next to him the “Twenty-four Elders.” Then the “Seraphims or Archbishops.” Then three orders of priests, viz., “the Priests of the Stool of the Majesty of God, or the Bishops;” then “the Priests of the Rule of God,” and lastly, the lowest grade, the “Priests of the Paradise of the Lord.” They were consecrated with no fewer than eight distinct holy “waters,” and eight distinct holy “unguents,” the seventh and eighth for the highest bishop, the sixth and fifth for the archbishops, bishops, and twenty-four elders,” and the others for the lower orders of the priesthood. The priests were to be able to read and write, and to be well practised in the German language, which was the “holy language.” The priests were to give up all property except “themselves, their mind and knowledge.” They were to be supported by *tythes* from the members, which were strictly required from all kinds of property, which was carefully specified. The *tythe of the tythe* belonged to the higher orders of the priesthood. Two of the Elders of the *Rule* brought the “free will offerings” of the society to a meeting, at which the “Archbishop” received and “brought it to the Throne of the Divine Majesty.”

In the consecration of the Priests, the Seraphims “first got rid of the corruption of earthly marriage.” After being separated from all their friends and blood relations, and “giving themselves to reading and prayer,” they were consecrated, the archbishop kissing them on the cheek and blessing them. In this way they were deemed spiritually celibates, while marriage was in no way interfered with. A man and his wife might *both* be priests, but the female sex could not enter any but the lowest grade.

Saturday and Sunday were both holy days. No wine was to be drunk, and no work done. They met on Sunday for divine worship. The Elders of the Rule of God showed out of the writings of Henry Nicholas "what the Service of Love was, and the obedience of the faith of Jesus Christ and his priestly office in his Catholic church." Complete obedience to the priest was strictly enjoined. Nicholas made a new Calendar, and a variety of holy days, in addition to the usual festivals of the Church. The day of the birth of John the Baptist and the Virgin, and Christmas day, were mentioned as specially holy.

The seeds of the downfall of this extraordinary religious society were contained in the belief it enjoined in the great revelations made to Nicholas, and generally in the opinion that new revelations were to be looked for to guide the whole Christian Church, without the test of sensible miracles. The Prophet ordered everything to the minutest particular, even as to the succession of the property of the members, &c., as if the society were to last for ever. It lasted not much more than half a century on the Continent, and lingered in England, where they were the most numerous, till the times of the Commonwealth, when they preached in the open air in 1645. This strange religious society, which had defied the power of Elizabeth to uproot, then silently disappeared in the fierce and open struggle of the time between truth and error.* We add at the foot of the next page a short history of the life of Nicholas. (*q.v.*)

* The Familists preached publicly in 1645. We find a Mr. Randell preached "that a man baptised with the Holy Ghost knew all things." He taught that "there was a resurrection here and perfection," and appears to have quoted 1 Cor. xv. 57, in proof of it. "This," says the author of the pamphlet, "is not to be allowed at the present time." "*A Brief Discovery of the Blasphemous Doctrine of Familism.*" London. 1645.

We have sufficiently shewn that the Puritan party *did not attempt a separation* from the Church of England.* We have shewn also that a regularly constituted church was formed in Queen Mary's days, and another about 1571, of which Richard Fitz was pastor, "who professed and

A SHORT HISTORY OF HENRY NICHOLAS, OR NICLAES.

FOUNDER OF THE "FAMILY OF LOVE."

Henry Nicholas's father was an upright man, very zealous in the performance and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church. He took little Henry every day to the mass and preaching, and explained to him that everything in the mass must be fulfilled in the inner life of every man through Jesus Christ. At family prayer, when eight years old, he asked his father "why he thanked God?" The father explained to him the forgiveness of our sins in Jesus Christ, and the foundation thus laid for the true life of godliness. But the boy replied that "he could not notice that sin *was* lessened and man brought to true righteousness." His father said he must not doubt the grace of God, but simply believe it. Little Henry replied that "he did not in the slightest degree doubt that through the death of Christ an entrance was made for us into the kingdom of God, if we followed Him in his path of suffering." But what troubled his mind was this, that there must be a reinstatement of man into his primeval state of perfection, and thus the rent made by sin would be taken away. Now *this* had not yet happened to man, and so that God must have willed to fulfil the reinstatement of man to his perfect righteousness which was destroyed by sin, in *another way* than that in which most men suppose. The father was at his wits' end, and so the question was propounded to his father Confessor, a Franciscan friar, but he and his brethren could give no answer, and the child was told not to trouble his mind about such questions, which would only procure him a whipping. But he answered his Confessor that he knew he was quite young to investigate the deep and hidden things of God, and that all he wanted was to be taught. The friar, seeing the boy ready to doubt respecting the satisfaction of Christ for our sins, allowed him to speak, and he again assured him that *this* was not what he doubted about. The question in his mind was how we are to be brought into the state of Adam before he fell, and into the true righteousness of Christ, and the power taken from death, and the true godliness in Christ fulfilled in us. He asked, were we still indebted for the fruits of repentance or not? The child's intellect was not satisfied by the answers he received. In his ninth year this was explained to little Henry in a vision. "Suddenly a great light and clearness of God in the form of a mountain approached him and penetrated his whole being. This

* Field and Wilcocks, who prescribed the Puritan address to Parliament, after explaining their objects to the archbishop's chaplain in their prison, said, "We are not for an unspotted church on earth, and therefore, though the Church of England has many faults, we would not willingly *leave it*." "Dr. Waddington's History," p. 7.

practised that cause before Mr. Browne wrote for it." * The views of the Separatists were now advocated by Robert Browne. He was first cousin to Lord Burghley and chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk. He was a young man of great ability and clearness of expression, and a good

Short history of Henry Nicholas, continued.

answered his questions, how we are to attain to the perfection of God. He himself was now penetrated by the divine Spirit, and now he is become "a divine man." This "unity of being with God" was "the true fulfilment of godliness in Christ, and was the great day of judgment upon earth." When the vision was over he found himself awake, but so wearied that he slept again. In this sleep the further step was reached that he was directly called to be a Prophet to enlighten others. Then followed a vision of "tearing wolves" and other wild beasts. He was terribly frightened, and woke, crying, "Ah, ah, what will be the sentence passed upon my soul?" His parents came to his bed with the question, "What was the matter?" but he merely said that he felt unwell, and imparted his revelations to no one. These wild beasts described the third period of his life and figured the wicked who were unavailingly to persecute him. When he was twenty his parents gave him a virtuous young lady for wife, and he took a mercantile business. God blessed his trade. In his 27th year he was put in prison on the suspicion of Lutheranism, but after a severe examination they found him a sound Catholic. Later he went to Amsterdam. In his 30th year, in Amsterdam, he associated with some who had "fallen away from the Catholic Church, but exercised themselves with righteousness." He became, Arnold says in his *Kirchen und Ketzer Historie* (Th. ii. B. xvi. C. 21, p. 36), "a good friend of David Joris," the celebrated Anabaptist, "who wrote to him confidentially." He was again thrown into prison, but "nothing uncatholic" was found in him. He kept aloof, he says, from all Anabaptist sects. In his 39th year he received another revelation. As in his youth, God appeared to him and penetrated his whole being. The Holy Ghost poured the true love of Jesus Christ over him. He said to him, "Fear not, I am He who is All in All." "I will reinstate everything, as I have spoken through my prophets, and set up the house of Israel again in its glory." "Now in the full maturity of my holy understanding I will reveal myself more fully, and what thou could'st not bear in thy youth, so that thou makest known everything to the children of men which I impart to thee. For, for this purpose I have borne thee from thy youth on my heart, for a house for me to dwell in, and up to this time I have preserved thee from all destruction in which the evil and ungodly shall inherit eternal death, and the good and obedient eternal life." He was then made more entirely one with the will and word of God, and God commanded him to put his revelations in print and publish them, and gave him as companions in the service of the word, "Daniel," "Elidad," and "Tobias." He lived nine years in Amsterdam, and then received a revelation to go to Emden in his 39th year. From

*See Dialogue printed in 1593, quoted by Dr. Waddington, "Congregational Martyrs," p. 15. .

preacher. His object was to form separate congregations in each parish. He visited various parts of the country, in conjunction with Robert Harrison, forming churches. In Norfolk and Suffolk the Separatist Churches met in such a close and secret manner, that Dr. Freke, the Bishop of

Short history of Henry Nicholas, continued.

this time he stood forth as a Prophet and founder of a sect. He seems to imply that he was imprisoned (? tortured and released) at Embden. He remained there, busied himself with his writings. He and his followers appear to have used these in obtaining proselytes. They did not teach in public. All his steps were in secret, and he sought to win disciples by personal influence. He received at Emden another revelation, and this time it enabled him to take in "the whole host of heaven and the perfection of God." He carried on his mercantile business, taking business journeys from Embden all over Holland and Brabant, from 1540 to 1560.* His wealth was not insignificant. His wife died shortly after 1560. He had three daughters and two sons. In his 59th year the council of Embden concluded on his imprisonment, but he was not to be found. His goods were confiscated, and a warrant for his apprehension was issued to the magistrates of other towns and lands. It is probable that in this year he went to England, afterwards to Kampen, and some years later to Cologne. In his 64th year the word of the Lord came again to him; only the twenty-four Elders and the four Seraphs of the House of Love were to travel with him, and a new and better organization of the Society was resolved on. This led to disputes, the subject of which was, that he was desirous of enacting a stricter obedience than some of his followers desired, and his inspiration was questioned. He appears to have died about 1570. One of his earliest and principal adherents was Henry Jansen from Barneveldt in Gelderland. He is called in the Familist Tracts "Hiel." The British Museum is very rich in these tracts. Mr. J. H. Hessels (Librarian at Trinity College Library Dublin), in December, 1869, published in "Notes and Queries," a list of Familist Tracts. The following are in the British Museum: "Mirabilia Opera Dei," 852, *a* 1, 5; "Evangeliam Regni," 4408, *a* 1656; "The First Epistle," 697, *b* 31; "A Publishing of the Peace upon Earth," 697, *a* 26, 1574; "Evangelium Regni," 697, *a* 26; "The Prophetic of the Spirit of Love," 697, *a* 26, 1574; "Comædia, Gren Coll.," 11, 158; "Dicta," *H. N.*, 697, *a* 26; "Proverbia," *H. N.*, 697, *a* 26; "Second Exhortation of *H. N.*," 4408, *a* 448, *a*, 2nd Tract; "Epistle unto Two Daughters of Warwick," 4106, *b* 1608; "Fidelitas," 697, *a* 26; "A Good and Fruitful Exhortation," 697, *a* 26; "An Apology," &c., *e* 1610, date 1656; Against the Familists—"A Displaying," *c* 21, *a*, 1579; "An Answer," 3932, ^{*B*} _{*1*} 1579; "A Confutation," &c., 852, *a* 1, 1579; "A Supplication," 852, *a* 1, 1606; "*J. Ethrington*," *e* 2¹⁷; "An Exposition of the Ten Commandments," year 1586., MS.; Henry Ainsworth's "A Refutation," &c., Amstd., 1608, 4106 *b*; "A Description of the Sect," &c., 1641, 1326, *a* 4.

* This entirely disposes of the theory of Krohn in his history of Melchior Hoffman, p. 327, that the Englishman "Henry" who paid the expenses of the delegates at the great meeting of Anabaptists at Buckholt, in 1596, was Henry Nicolaes.

Norwich, found it impossible to suppress them. Browne was soon apprehended, but was set at liberty and became pastor of the English Church at Middleburgh in Zealand in 1581, where he formed a church on his own plan, having for his colleague Robert Harrison, who succeeded him. He published a book in 1582—"A book which sheweth the life and manners of all true christians." He maintained that Christ is the Head of the Church ; that every congregation of christians is a church free from all external control ; that the government of the Church by civil power is "the kingdom of anti-christ ;" that the office of "teaching or guiding" is a "charge or message committed by God to those who have gifts for the same ;" and that the people of the congregation were the proper judges of their gifts, and should have the election of their minister. In 1584 he is found in Scotland. He returned to England in 1585, and itinerated, diffusing his views wherever he came—he was a man of fiery temperament and a popular preacher. His success was therefore greater than that of a mere writer. Browne was at last induced by his relative Lord Burghley, to desert the cause he had espoused, and in 1586 a post was found for him as schoolmaster in St. Olave's Grammar School in Southwark, and finally he received preferment to a church in Northamptonshire. The opinions held by the "Separatists," as may be seen from a tract published in 1582, entitled, "A true description, out of the Word of God, of the Visible Church," * were "that the Church universal containeth in it all the elect of God that have been, are, or shall be ; that the Church visible consists of a company and fellowship of faithful and holy people gathered in the name

* This corresponds in some parts verbally with a paper found by Dr. Waddington in the State Papers endorsed "Jerome Studley," one of the Separatist prisoners.

of Christ Jesus, their only king, priest, and prophet, being personally and quietly governed by His offices and laws, keeping the unity of the faith in the bond of peace, and in love unfeigned." Every stone hath His beauty, His burden, and His order, *all* bound to edify one another, exhort, reprove and comfort one another. In this church they have holy laws to direct them in the choice of every officer what kind of men the Lord will have. The pastor must be apt to teach, no young scholar, able to divide the word aright ; he must be a man that loveth goodness, wise, righteous, holy, temperate, modest, humble, meek, gentle, and loving ; a man of great patience, compassion, labour, and diligence —he must always be careful and watchful over the flock whereof the Lord hath made him overseer, with all willingness and cheerfulness. Their doctor or teacher must be a man apt to teach—he must be mighty in the Scriptures, able to convince the gainsayers. Their elders must be of wisdom and judgment, endued with the Spirit of God, able to discern between cause and cause, between plea and plea ; always vigilant and superintending to see the statutes, ordinances, and laws of God kept in the Church, not only by the people, but to see the officers do their duties, but not to intrude into their offices. Their deacons must be men of honest report. Their relievers or widows must be women of 60 years of age at the least, given to every good work, to minister to the Sick.* Such were the views and aims of the men who were loaded with reproaches by all parties, and deemed to be aiming at the overthrow of both the christian religion and the State.

* But the existence of these regular church officers was not to debar other members of the Church from the exercise of prophecy which was manifested according to their gifts and abilities. All the saints were exhorted to the exercise of their gifts as "most needful at all times, especially when the teacher or pastor were imprisoned or exiled."

In 1589 and 1590 were written the celebrated “Martin Marprelate” tracts. They were dispersed all over the kingdom, and contained a scurrilous attack of the most satirical kind upon the prelates. They show that the tyranny of the bishops was becoming most unpopular. Their language appealed not to truly Christian men, but to the people, and they doubtless tended to widen the struggle and give it a popular as well as a religious aspect. The authors were never discovered. The expression “dumb dogs” (as applied to the bishops’ creation of that period, of ignorant, non-preaching ministers) occurs in them, although its use may doubtless be traced farther back.

Brownism now spread rapidly, and in 1591 an Act was framed which affected the laity as severely as the clergy. It was levelled against those who in any way impugned “Her Majesty’s power and authority in causes ecclesiastical,” against those who in any way dissuaded any from coming to church, or receiving the communion, under penalty of perpetual banishment, and a felon’s death if they returned from banishment. Sir Walter Raleigh declared, on the passing of this Act, that there were above 20,000 Brownists in England, and asked, if they were banished, who was to maintain their wives and children ?

NOTE.—See page 14 (*continued*).—Joan Bocher was burnt 2nd May, 1550, for maintaining that Christ assumed nothing of the Virgin Mary, but passed through her as a conduit pipe.—See Fuller’s Church Hist., iv., 42 (Brewer); Andrewes’ Sermons, p. 11b (Ed. 1682) “Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum,” ch. v.; Fleury Hist. Eccl., book xviii., ch. 24. Ann Askew also held this opinion of Melchior Hofmann, no doubt handed down from a much earlier time. The following quotation has been kindly given me by J. E. B. Mayor, M.A.—Greg. Naz. Ep., 101 (ii., 35b, ed. Bened.)

CHAPTER III.

THE COURSE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1640 (*continued*). THE RISE OF THE BARROWISTS, JOHNSONISTS, SEPARATISTS, OR EARLY INDEPENDENTS.

In the year 1586, John Greenwood and Henry Barrow, who were fellow students at Cambridge, joined the Separatists. Greenwood was domestic chaplain at Rochford Hall. Henry Barrow, B.A., was the son of Thomas Barrow of Shipdham, in Norfolk, and, after leaving Corpus Christi College, he studied the law at Gray's Inn. He was a frequenter of the Court, and of dissipated habits. Walking on Sunday in London, he heard a Puritan preacher preaching very loudly, and turned into the church. The preacher "sharply reproved sin, and sharply applied the judgments of God against the same." The result was an entire change of life in Henry Barrow, and he became a noble witness for the truth of God. Greenwood was arrested for reading the Scriptures to twenty-one persons, at the house of Henry Martin, in the parish of St. Andrew, by the Wardrobe, in the year 1586. Barrow visited his friend in the Clink prison. He was then arrested without warrant, placed in a boat and taken to the Palace of Lambeth, and was imprisoned in the Gate-house by Archbishop Whitgift. For six years

Barrow and Greenwood occupied themselves in prison in writing tracts, explanatory of their views, on scraps of paper, which were conveyed, by those who had access to them, with great secrecy to Holland, where they were printed and again conveyed to England, and circulated by the Separatists. This led, by the providence of God, to the accession to the ranks of the Separatists, of a leader of great eminence, Francis Johnson. He was the son of the Mayor of Richmond, in Yorkshire. He was a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and defended the views of the Puritans in a sermon at St. Mary's Church, for which he was imprisoned. Francis Johnson was a preacher to the company of English, of the Staple at Middleburg, in Zealand. He was highly respected, and in receipt of "a considerable maintenance," and was "so zealous against this way," that when "Mr. Barrow and Mr. Greenwood's refutation of Gifford was privately printing in this city, he not only was a means to discover it, but was made the ambassador's instrument to intercept them at the press and see them burnt, which charge he did so well perform, as he let them go on until they were wholly finished, and then surprised the whole impression," and by the magistrates' authority he had the whole burnt, reserving two copies—"one to keep in his own study, and the other to bestow upon a special friend." He sat down to read it superficially, but was "so taken, and his conscience was troubled so that he could have no rest in himself, until he crossed the sea and came to London to confer with the authors who were in prison and shortly after executed." He did not return to Middleburg, but joined himself to the society of Separatists in London,* and when he again reached Amsterdam,

* Governor Bradford's Dialogue, printed in "New England Memorial," p. 334.

at his own cost, reprinted the books he had burned. About the same time John Penry came to London. He was a young Puritan preacher, and his object was to obtain the aid of the Queen and Parliament for the speedy evangelization of Wales. He visited Barrow, who told him that he was seeking "to bring in Christ by the arm of flesh, and not by the power of His Word, and virtue of His Spirit, into the hearts and consciences of men," and so reasoned with him that Penry cast in his lot with the despised Separatists. The prison authorities now relaxed the close confinement in which Greenwood had been placed at the Fleet Prison, and he was transferred to the house of Roger Rippon. This opened the way for the formation of a regular Congregational Church. Francis Johnson was chosen pastor, John Greenwood teacher, and Daniel Studley and George Knyveton elders. They baptized the children of believers and administered the Lord's Supper with extreme simplicity. The place of meeting of the Church was changed every time they met. Their meetings excited great alarm, and on December 5th, 1592, Francis Johnson and John Greenwood were seized at the house of Edward Boyes on Ludgate Hill, and committed to prison. On the 23rd of March, 1593, Barrow, Greenwood, Studley and others, were fined for publishing and dispersing "seditious books," asserting the independence of the Church of Christ from all external interference. On the following day Barrow and Greenwood were brought to Tyburn, and "tyed by our neck to the tree, were permitted to speak a few words."* They were then reprieved, and then, with a refinement of cruelty, because they would not promise in future "to come to church," were again conveyed to Tyburn

* Letter, dated "4th or 5th of 4th Month, 1593."

and suffered death as felons ; their wives and children were cast out of the city, and their goods confiscated. The reason of this proceeding was, that the House of Commons had at first refused to pass a Bill against the Barrowists and Brownists, making it a felony to maintain any opinion against the ecclesiastical government ; and the day after this “dislike” had been shewn by the House, Barrow and Greenwood “were early in the morning hanged.” This blow of the Queen and bishops was followed up on the 5th of April, 1593, by another. They surprised the Separatist Church at Islington, and 56 were taken prisoners and brought up with others also for examination. John Penry and Francis Johnson were taken at this meeting. On the 29th May, Penry was hung, and one of his friends was actually brought into the High Commissioner’s Court, and charged with having “received and entertained the said Penry,” and before his arraignment, “did then promise to pray for him ! ” Penry addressed a touching “protestation” before his death, to the Lord Treasurer Burghley. Hard, indeed, must have been the hearts which were not touched with the simple eloquence of a young man who had lived for the good of others. “I am a poor young man,” said he, “born and bred in the mountains of Wales. I am the first, since the last springing up of the Gospel in this latter age, that laboured to have the blessed seed thereof sown in those barren mountains. I have often rejoiced before God (as He knoweth) that I had the favour to be born under Her Majesty, for the promoting of this work. . . . And being now to end my days, before I am come to one half of my years in the likely course of nature, I leave the success of my labours unto such of my countrymen as the Lord will raise up after me, for the accomplishing of that work, which in the calling of my country unto the knowledge of

Christ's blessed gospel, I began. . . . Whatever I wrote in religion, the same I did simply for no other end than for the bringing of God's truth to light. I never did anything in this cause (Lord, thou art witness) for contention, vain-glory, or to draw disciples after me." He wrote to his wife, "6th of the 4th month, of April, 1593—I am ready, pray for me, and desire the Church to pray for me, much and earnestly. The Lord comfort thee, good Helen, and strengthen thee; be not dismayed, I know not how thou doest for outward things, but my God will provide. My love be with thee, now and ever, in Jesus Christ." He besought the Church to "take my poor and desolate widow, and my mess of fatherless and friendless orphans with you into exile, whithersoever you go," and commended them to "Him who will hear their cry, for he is merciful." He died, "looking for that blessed crown of glory, which of the great mercy of my God is ready for me in heaven." In accordance with Penry's advice, the Separatist Church, as far as they were able, went to Amsterdam in 1593. Francis Johnson petitioned Lord Burghley, the Lord Treasurer, who appears to have had some feeling for the persecuted Separatists, or some desire to thwart the "prelate of Canterbury." Henry Jacob, a Puritan minister in Kent, was, during Johnson's imprisonment in the Clink, induced to discuss the questions between the Puritans and Separatists, with the view of convincing Johnson, but the result was that he joined the Separatists. The operations of the Church of the Separatists in Southwark, were not merely confined to the metropolis; they had a staff of preachers, among whom was John Smyth (who, we shall shew, occupied an important position in the movement, and was destined to be the leader of a new school of opinion) and four others.

John Smyth and others preached in Somersetshire. Barrow, before he died, left a stock for the relief of the poor of the church, which materially assisted them in their exile.

We now pause in the thread of this history of the Separatist Church, to define their position with reference to the Puritan party in the Church. Henry Barrow was a layman. He saw clearly that the substitution of the Puritan or Presbyterian system of Church government for the Episcopal or Anglican system, would not give that freedom from external control, which was an essential condition of the growth of the Christian religion as taught in the New Testament. It was the sacerdotal system which was the root of the evil. A mere change from prelacy to Presbyterianism would not rid England from the government of priests. If the language of Barrow and Greenwood was at times uncompromising, and even bitter, let us remember the treatment to which the whole body of this little church was subjected. The Puritan party were against them. They stood alone, without sympathy from those who had suffered with them for the testimony of a good conscience. Forty-two ministers were employed by the bishops as detectives, and instructed to visit the Separatist prisoners twice a week, to entrap them into some expressions which could be used against them at their trial. Six Puritan ministers were told off for the purpose of conferring with Barrow and Greenwood. In a petition to the Lords of the Privy Council, they complain that the "Romish prelacy and priesthood left in this land," had, by "the great power and high authority they have gotten into their hands . . . above all, the public courts, judges, laws and charters of this land," persecuted, imprisoned, detained at their pleasure their "poor bodies without any trial, release, or bail permitted." They were thrown into Newgate, "laden with as

many irons as they could bear," they were "beaten with cudgels in the prison . . . cast into Little Ease,"* where they ended their lives. "Many aged widows, aged men, and young maidens have perished," they say, in prison, "within these five years." The bishops' pursuivants "break into their houses at all hours of the night . . . break up, ransack, rifle, and make havoc at their pleasure." The "two special points on which we dislike them," writes Bancroft, were "their departing from our churches, and the framing to themselves a church of their own." Barrow and Greenwood were greatly grieved by the tendency to unfaithfulness, in the whole Puritan party, to their conscientious convictions. "All the precise Puritans," he says, "who refuse the ceremonies of the church, strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." He deems them "close hypocrites;" he thinks "they walk in a left handed policy, as Master Cartwright, Wigginton, &c. . . . These your great learned preachers, your good men that sigh and groan for a further reformation, but their hands (with the sluggard) deny to work: these would raise up a second error by so much the more dangerous, by how much it hath more show of truth. . . . Thus the Puritans would still have *the whole land to be 'the church.'*" Their reformation was not to be effected by "the word preached," but they "would have all redressed in one day," by a political change of the outward form of the so-called church,† in which they would include the whole commonwealth, instead of calling men

* The technical term for an awful hole into which their bodies were crushed, and so constructed as to render sleep almost impossible. The early Friends were also thus treated. In one case the prisoner died simply from the pressure.

† Barrow's "Brief Discovery of the False Churches," chap. xxiii., pp. 274, 275. Ed. 1707.

"into the right practice of the gospel . . . by the power of his own word and spirit, as it hath wrought in their hearts true repentance and conversion." Barrow maintains the essential distinction of Church and State, and reproves Calvin's proceedings at Geneva as "rash and disorderly . . . where he at the first dash made no scruple to receive *the whole state*, and consequently all the profane, ignorant people, into the bosom of the Church, and to administer the sacrament to them. . . . Whereby the Church became a just reproach, even to the wicked hereticks, &c., nay, that which is worse and more to be lamented, is that it became a precedent and example to the greatest part of Europe to fall into like transgression."* They set the clergy above the people, who are not to have a free voice in their Synods and select Classes of ministers. These synods are to have "absolute power over all churches, doctrines, and ministers; to elect, ratify, or abrogate; to excommunicate or depose at their pleasure. Their decrees are most holy." The Presbyterian party simply substituted pastors and elders for parsons and questmen, synods for commissionary courts, high councils instead of high commissions. "As for these new officers, these elders," he says, with much sagacity, that it is an injurious device for keeping *the people* from the knowledge and performance of their duties in the Church of Christ; they will be "the wealthiest, honest, simple men in the parish, that shall sit for cyphers by their pastor, and meddle with nothing," and the people will get nothing but "the smoaky, windy, title of election" of their pastors only.† The "pontificals," he says, refute the scriptural right of the people in a christian

* Barrow's "False Churches," pp. 59 and 60. Ed. 1707.

† Ibid, pp. 278, 279.

church to govern their own affairs, " by Machiavel's considerations and Aristotle's politics, instead of the New Testament." Barrow complained that the Book of Common Prayer was set above the Bible. " This book, in their churches, must have the sovereignty ; it may not be gainsaid or controlled ; or, if it be, the Word of God must give place." * He says that prayer is a spiritual sacrifice, that the Holy Spirit is given to teach us to pray. " Shall we think that God hath at any time left his children so singly furnished, and so destitute of his grace, that they cannot find words according to their necessities, and faith to express their wants and desires, but need to be taught, line upon line, as children new weaned from the breasts, what and when to say, how much to say, and when to make an end. . . . Is not this presumptuous," he asks, respecting the liturgy, " to undertake to teach the Spirit of God, and to take away his office, which instructeth all the children of God to pray with gifts and groans inexpressible. . . . Yea, the Apostle John saith we need no other teacher to these things, than the 'anointing' which we have received, and dwelleth in us."

Barrow was strongly opposed to ritualism. " How like children, or rather masking fools, are these great clerks dressed !" If the false church of the prelates was the "first beast" in the Revelations, then surely the Presbyterian system would prove, if it were established, the "second beast."

Barrow objected strongly to pulpits,† which he complains would " receive no more than *one* person—except it be a

* "A Brief Discovery of the False Churches." See quotation from this edition in Hanbury, vol. i., p. 43. 1590.

† Barrow's "False Churches," p. 263. Ed. 1707.

suggestor or prompter as is practised in some particular places," which gives us curious insight into the customs of the times in the Church. "Neither," says he, "ordinarily does," any "more than one" preacher "at a time" speak in the church, and "for the most part disputes by the hour-glass, which being run out, his sermonication must also be at an end." Whatever doctrine he may preach, whether he handles the subject "unsufficiently" or "unsavorily," no "supplies of others" can be had, and the congregation has no power and must put up with it. The preachers, too, "have a *prescribed* time when to begin," and a "prescript place called a pulpit." The prophesying of the Puritans was also not the prophesying described in the New Testament. "The members of the Church being divers, and having received divers gifts, are (according to the grace given to every one) to serve the Church;" if they have the gift of prophecy, then are they to exercise it according to the proportion of faith, keeping to the Word of God always. "It belongeth," he says, "to the *whole church*, and none of them ought to be shut out." Dr. Some merely "traduces the ordinances of Christ," when he calls this practice "anabaptistical."* Barrow held that the universities were a complete failure, in their mission of training christian ministers. "If the tree be known by the fruit, and the nest by the birds, then let the present state of the most general part of the clergy shew what kind of seminaries and colleges these universities are." Doctors of "divinity" are a remnant of popery. He desires that the "whole Church might be trained in schools, to teach the tongues, or in any laudable or necessary art," and that "the Protestant nobility, as well as the common people,

* Barrow's "False Churches," pp. 247—253. Ed. 1707.

were prophets ;” but these things should not be taught in “monkish, confused, idle, profane colleges and fellowships,” but in a holy, sanctified, reverend, grave manner.” The colleges are “the very hives and nurseries of these armed locusts, and venomous scorpions and teaching priests, as popes, cardinals, archbishops, &c.,” and they have “fought under the pope their captain general.” The very names of the month and the week are heathenish, and christian men should say “first month, first day of the week,” &c.* The practice of wearing mourning “for set and stated months,” and “black attire outwardly,” he disapproves as a heathen, not a christian custom.† Greenwood gives a lamentable account of the state of religion among the Puritan party in the Church of England. Their “preachers run for hire and wages,” instead of protesting against the state of the ministry in the church; they do not withdraw the people from “dumb and plurified pastors.” They “make a show as though they sought a sincere reformation of all things according to the gospel of Christ, and yet support “the bishops, their courts and accomplices, and all those detestable enormities which they should have utterly removed and not reformed.” “Long were it to relate their arts and engines whereby they hunt and entangle poor souls—their counterfeit shows of holiness, gravity, austereness of manners, preciseness in trifles, large conscience in matters of greatest weight, especially of any *danger*; straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel, hatred and thundering against *some* sin, tolerating, yea, colouring some other in special persons; cunning, insinuating into and withholding the *known* truth of God in *respect* of times, and places, and persons—dissembling, hiding, and withholding

* Barrow’s “False Churches,” p. 204, &c.

† Ibid, p. 197.

it in their public ministry and doctrines, when it may draw them into any trouble and trial, yea, baulking, if not perverting the evident scriptures, as they arise against any *public enormity* of the time, under colour of ‘peace, christian policy, and wisdom,’ whereby these scorpions so poison and sting every good conscience, so leaven them with hypocrisy, &c., that their ‘whole auditory’ are so ‘entangled with their snares,’ that ‘scarce any of them, without the special mercy of God, are ever recovered or brought to any soundness, stability, or upright walking, *to any conscience*, true faith, or fear of God.’ ”

We cannot expect to find men in the position of Barrow and Greenwood weakly sparing the great Puritan party. If Christianity requires us to carry out in practice our conscientious convictions, we must agree, that while Barrow, Greenwood, and Penry exhibited the same description of courage as that of the early christian martyrs, the course of the Puritan party in the reign of Elizabeth was not altogether worthy of themselves and their cause. The cause of the Separatists was that of spiritual religion, while that of the Puritans was a compromise. Their private religious convictions had to be sacrificed to their political aims. Although Greenwood says that he “never conversed with the ‘Brownists’ or their writings,” and that the Brownists attended church while his followers did not, there can be no question that the opinions of the followers of Barrow and Greenwood, and those of Robert Browne, were nearly identical.

But we must remember that the Separatist Church at Southwark, formed by Barrow, Greenwood, and Penry, and of which Francis Johnson, Henry Jacob, and John Smyth were members, has a history distinct from that party of “Brownists” who may be considered as persons holding the

same opinions, but who had merely commenced to hold religious meetings; while the "Barrowists," or "Johnsonists," had the courage to *separate* entirely from the Established Church, and to form a *distinct society* or Church of their own.

In the year 1597 there was a project for forming a settlement in America, and the imprisoned Separatist Church appear to have heard of it and petitioned her Majesty "that as means are now offered of our being in a foreign and far country, which lieth to the west from hence in the province of Canada," they might be allowed "to do her Majesty and our country good service" and "in time greatly annoy the bloody and persecuting Spaniard about the Bay of Mexico." On the 25th May, 1597, it appears that "Abraham Van Hardwick and Stephen Van Hardwick, merchant strangers, and Charles Leigh, merchant of London, trading," undertake a voyage of fishing and discovery unto "the Bay of Canada, and to plant themselves in the Island of Rainea (an Island near Newfoundland)," simultaneously made "humble suit to her Majesty to transport out of this realm divers artificers and others, persons that are noted to be sectaries, whose minds are continually in an ecclesiastical ferment, whereof four shall at this present sail thither in those ships that go this present voyage."* These four prisoners were Francis Johnson, pastor of the Separatist church at Southwark, Daniel Studley, one of their elders, with George Johnson (the brother of Francis Johnson, and of whom we shall hear again) and John Clark. The voyage proved disastrous, but it had finally released them from prison, and they found their way to Amsterdam, where the remainder of the exiled Church, who had preceded them,† elected Francis Johnson

* Register of the Privy Council, found by Dr. Waddington and quoted in his "Congregational History," p 114.

† In 1593. Johnson's reply to White, p. 63.. Ainsworth's reply to Paget, p. 45.

as their Pastor, and the celebrated Henry Ainsworth as Teacher, and Daniel Studley and others as Elders. Here we leave them and return to John Smyth, who remained in the Marshalsea Prison in Southwark, and was liberated, probably in consideration of his having been “ sick nigh unto death,” and having “ doubted of the separation nine months.”* After conferring with certain Puritan ministers† at the house of Sir W. Bowes at Coventry, he received no satisfaction, but never repudiated the Separation; he tells us he then formed, and became pastor to a Separatist Church at Gainsborough in the year 1602, where Bradford informs us “ by the travell and diligence of some godly and zealous preachers, and God’s blessing on their labours, as in other places of their land, so in the north parts many became enlightened by the word of God, and had their ignorance and sins discovered unto them, and began, by His grace to reform their lives and make conscience of their ways.” At a later period another Separatist Church was formed at Scrooby, of which Richard Clyfton was pastor, and to him succeeded the celebrated John Robinson, William Brewster being Elder. These churches were therefore on the borders of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire, and maintained a close connection. The church at Scrooby was held in a manor house of the bishop’s, which was in the occupation of William Brewster, who held the position of postmaster between 1594 and 1607,‡ and this doubtless secured this church from disturbance for a longer period. The date of John Smyth and “ his company” leaving England for Amsterdam is not known, but it is probable that this took place between 1604 and 1606, and the formation of the

* “ Parallel Answers, Observations,” &c., by John Smyth, pp. 1 and 128-9.

† These were Dod, Hildersham, and Barbon—“ Brook’s Puritans,” p. 196.

‡ Hunter’s “ Founders of New Plymouth,” pp. 66, 68.

Scrooby Church took place about 1606.* Smyth addressed a letter "to certain brethren in S.," which may doubtless be taken to have been written to the Scrooby church, from Amsterdam at this date, and in which he expressed the utmost confidence of the ultimate success of the movement, "although you are but few in number, yet, considering that the kingdom of Heaven is as a grain of mustard seed, small at the beginning, I do not doubt but you may in time grow up to be a multitude, and be, as it were, a great tree full of fruitful branches."† Smyth, after a certain period, supported himself at Amsterdam by practising physic. "He usually took nothing of the poorer sort, and, if they were rich, he took half as much as other doctors did, excepting some who were well able and well minded, urged more upon him." He lived "sparingly" rather than "that any should be in extremity." On one occasion, "seeing one slenderly appalled, he sent them his gowne to make them clothes." He was "well beloved of most men and hated of none." He did "good both for soul and body."‡ This eminent man, while honoured by those who opposed him in England for his great talents, and on all hands admitted to have been one of the most able of the Separatists, has been charged by his brethren with the inconstancy of his opinions, and the charge has been repeated by modern writers. For this there appears not to have been the slightest ground, excepting that, in his desire to possess the whole truth, he carried out the principles of the Separation to their logical issue. He was the first enunciator in England of the great principles of *complete and perfect religious freedom* as opposed to a partial toleration by the state of certain

* Hunter's "Founders of New Plymouth," p. 89.

† "Paralles, Censures, Observations," by John Smyth. 1609, last four pages.

‡ See "Life of John Smyth," recently found in York Minster Library.

"tolerable" opinions. His life and death do honour to his christian character, while the General Baptist Churches, of whose religious principles he was enunciator, were the consistent and uniform advocates of religious liberty.

The records of the Ecclesiastical Court at York show that information was given against William Brewster, of Scrooby, on December 1st, 1607, and about this period many of the Church appear to have attempted to reach Holland. In the spring of 1608 another attempt was made by a larger number, and a secret arrangement was made with a Dutchman to take them on board his ship between Grimsby and Hull, but by the time the first boatful had been taken to the ship, "the country was raised to take them . . . a great company, both horse and foot, with bills and guns, and other weapons." The Dutchman thereupon "swore his country's oath, 'sacremente,' and having the wind fair, waiyed his ancor, hoysed sayles and away." Thus the men were separated from their wives and children, who were thus left without "a cloath to shift them with more than they had upon their baks, and some scarce a peney about them . . . pitiful it was to see the heavy case of these poor women in their distress, what weeping and crying on every side; their poore little ones hanging about them, crying for fear and quaking with cold." Being thus apprehended, they were hurried from one place to another, and from one justice to another, till in the end they knew not what to do with them, for to imprison so many women and children for no other cause than that they must go with their husbands, seemed to be unreasonable. "To be shorte, after they had been thus turmoyled a good while, and conveyed from one constable to another, they were glad to be rid of them in the end upon any terms, and notwithstanding these storms of opposition, they all

gat over at length" * to Amsterdam, where they found their husbands, who had encountered a fearful storm. John Robinson and William Brewster remained in England till they had helped the weakest members of the flock to join their brethren, and after they had lived at Amsterdam about a year, in communion with the exiled Separatist Church from Southwark, Robinson advocated their removing to Leyden, where he founded the celebrated Church from whom the Church at New Plymouth, commonly called that of the Pilgrim Fathers, was an offset. The Church in Southwark was not, it appears, entirely suppressed, for in October, 1608, mention is made of a nest of Brownists, "whereof five or six and thirty were apprehended."

Before following the Separatists to Amsterdam, we must turn again to England. The publication of "Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity," (of which the first four books were published in 1594, the fifth in 1597, and the remaining three, after his death in the year 1600) marks the rise of another party in the Church of England which was destined to play an important part in the great events which took place later, and were taking place when Fox appeared on the scene in 1648. This party was conscientiously opposed to Puritan principles both in discipline and theology. James Arminius began to teach his system of theology, when Pastor at Amsterdam, in opposition to that of John Calvin, as early as 1591,† and the Church of the Separatists (in which Ainsworth was Pastor) contended with Arminius at an early period. Whether from this source, or whether the progress

* Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation," pp. 10 to 16, printed by the Mass. Historical Society, Boston, 1856.

† "Mosheim." 17th Century. Sect. ii., chap. 3; Part ii., note b, p. 459, Maclaine's Translat.

of thought had led many minds to the same conclusion, it is certain that Arminian doctrines took rapid hold of the party in the Church of England represented by Hooker, and that a similar division took place in the Separatist Church at Amsterdam, which, as we shall show, led to the formation of a new Church by John Smyth, of whom we have already spoken. Arminius taught, in opposition to Calvin, "that Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular, but that none but those who believe in Him can be partakers of this divine benefit; that it is necessary to man's conversion and salvation that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ; that this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a corrupt nature, begins, advances, and brings to perfection everything which can be called good in man, and that this grace does not force the man to act against his inclination, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse will of the impenitent sinner," and eventually his followers taught that "the saints might fall from grace," although Arminius taught that this was a matter which required a further and attentive examination of the Holy Scriptures.* Above all, he rejected the doctrine of Calvin respecting predestination and the Divine decrees, &c. "Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity" is the most able defence of Episcopacy and the principles of the Established Church of England, which has ever issued from the press, and Pope Clement VIII. said concerning it, "There is no learning that this man hath not reached into, nothing too hard for his understanding. His books

* "Mosheim." 17th Century. Chap. 3, parts iv. and v., pp. 461, 462.

will get reverence by age, for there are in them such seeds of eternity, that if the rest be like this, they shall last till the last fire shall consume all learning." Hooker* maintains against the Puritans, that though the Holy Scriptures are a perfect standard of doctrine, they are not a rule of discipline or government, nor is the practice of the Apostles an invariable rule or law to the Church in succeeding ages; that the Church is a Society like others, capable of making laws for her well being and government provided they do not interfere with, or contradict the laws and commandments of Holy Scripture—where Scripture is silent, human authority may interpose—the Church is therefore at liberty to *appoint ceremonies and establish order within its limits*, and that all who are born within the confines of an Established Church and are baptised into it, *are bound to submit to its ecclesiastical laws*, and he vindicates the ceremonies and orders of the Church from the objections of the Puritans. But the splendid genius of Hooker, however great its influence in forming a clearly defined party in the Church of England, was unequal to the task of convincing those who were relentlessly persecuted, and their reply was practically the same as that of young William Penn, who, when Charles II. sent Stillingfleet to him in the Tower to convince him by arguments, replied, "The Tower is to me the worst argument in the world." The actions of Whitgift, and the existence of the Court of High Commission, were more eloquent and convincing than the arguments of Hooker. "The sufferings of the Puritans," says Price, "during the primacy of Whitgift, are not to be paralleled in the history of Protestant intolerance, unless

* "Walton's Life of Hooker," p. 61 in Hooker's Works. Dobson's Edit. 1825. Cowie & Co., London.

perhaps, exception may be made of the times of the Second Charles." We venture to think that the sufferings of the Restoration far exceeded those of Elizabeth's reign, but whether this was the case or not, Elizabeth carried out a policy which she conceived necessary to consolidate a newly Established Church, and which nearly all of those who suffered under it, agreed was in principle correct, viz., the principle of coercion by the state in matters of religious opinion. Even the Separatist Church, whose history we have been tracing, presided over by Henry Ainsworth at Amsterdam, held (see Article 39th of their confession) that it was "the duty of princes and magistrates to suppress and root out by their authority all false ministries, voluntary religions, and counterfeit worship of God, yea, to *enforce* all their subjects, whether ecclesiastical or civil, *to do their duties to God and men.*" *

We cannot, in justice to the Church of England in Elizabeth's time, avoid the conclusion that the whole question in the mind of a Puritan, or even Separatist, or Brownist, of this period, respecting the iniquity of all persecution, turned on the conclusion that *he* was *right*, and the advocates of Episcopacy were *wrong*. The heartless cruelty which the bishops under Elizabeth displayed to their unfortunate victims, cannot however be excused on this ground.

In 1603 "the Brownists, Barrowists, Johnsonists," &c., petitioned the King's Most Excellent Majesty. They state that some of them are "constrained to live as exiles in

* So Greenwood (when pressed in his conference with Sperin and Cooper) said, "Both the magistrates ought to *compel* the infidels to *hear* the doctrine of the Church, and also with the approbation of the church, to *send forth men* with gifts and graces to instruct the infidels, being as yet no ministers or officers unto them." Dr. Waddington's Historical Papers, p. 186. Second Edition.

foreign lands," and that "others" are "still in our country." They refer to the "confession of our faith already exhibited to your Majesty,"* and shortly state the points of difference between themselves and the Church of England. The first Article asserts that the officers of the Church of Christ should be only those which He has appointed "in his last will and testament." Second—Churches are "particular churches." Third—They are companies of people "separated from the world by the word of God, and joined in a *voluntary* profession of the faith of Christ: no atheist, misbeliever, heretic, or wicked liar is to be received or retained." Fourth—Laymen, "discreet, faithful, and able men, though not in the office of the ministry," may be appointed to preach the Gospel, and that those "who are converted to the Lord" may be joined "in holy communion with Christ our Head." Fifth—Each Church has power to appoint five sorts of officers, as before described, and that no "antichristian hierarchy" is to be "set over, or retained in the Church of Christ." Sixth—Such officers' duties are "to feed the Church of Christ," and ought not "to be burdened with the execution of *civil affairs*, such as marriages, burying the dead," &c. Seventh—They are to be supported by the purely *voluntary* contributions of the Church, and not by "popish livings," or Jewish tithes, and that therefore the land, or like revenues of the prelates and clergy yet remaining, being still also baits to allure the Jesuits and seminaries into the land, and to introduce them to plot and execute their wonted evil courses in hope to enjoy them in time to come, may now by your Highness be taken away and converted to better uses, as those of the abbeys and nunneries, which

* Additional MSS. Brit. Museum, 8978 (138c) p. 238.

have heretofore by your Majesty's worthy predecessors, to the honour of God and great good of the realm. Eighth—Each particular Church has the power of admonishing or excommunicating their members. Ninth—That the Church be not governed by popish canons, &c., but by the New Testament. “That the Lord be worshipped in Spirit and in truth.” The Lord’s prayer and “the liturgy of his own Testament” might be used, but no other, such as the “Book of Common Prayer” “translated from the popish liturgy.” Tenth—The Churches not to observe “days and times, rites or ceremonies . . . but that Christian liberty be retained.” Eleventh—All “monuments of idolatry in garments;” all “temples, altars, chapels, and other places dedicated heretofore by the heathens or antichristians to their false worship . . . by lawful authority,” are to be razed and abolished, not suffered to remain to the nourishing of superstition, *much less employed for the true service of God.* Twelfth—Popish degrees in Theology, &c., to be abolished, that the colleges may become “well-springs of true learning and godliness.” Thirteenth—The sacrament only to be administered to the “faithful,” and “baptism to their seed or those under their government,” according to the simplicity of the Gospel.” Fourteenth—Finally, that “all churches and people (without exception) are only to be bound to submit to the order which Christ as Lord and King hath appointed.” They pray the King that “the ancient and only true way of Christ being revived,” they may be protected, and express the conviction that Christ will make all things concur to free his Church from, and destroy the “mummery of that anti-christian defection and iniquity,” for “strong is the Lord of Hosts, and He will perform it.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE COURSE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1640 (*continued*). THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF AMSTERDAM. HENRY AINSWORTH, FRANCIS JOHNSON, JOHN ROBINSON, AND JOHN SMYTH. THE RISE AT AMSTERDAM AND LEYDEN OF THE ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL OR INDEPENDENT CHURCHES, JOHNSON'S PRESBYTERIO-INDEPENDENT CHURCH, AND THE ENGLISH GENERAL BAPTIST OR MENNONITE CHURCH.

We now return to the Separatist Church at Amsterdam. The first portion of the exiles, as before stated, reached this city in 1593. Henry Ainsworth joined them about this period, and occupied a prominent position prior to his formal election to the office of "teacher" to the Church, conjointly with Francis Johnson, who was elected "Pastor." This took place on the arrival of Johnson. The history of Ainsworth, prior to his settlement in Amsterdam, is still involved in obscurity. He came "out of Ireland with other poor," Governor Bradford tells us. He concealed his wants from his fellow refugees; he was "a single young man and very studious," and Roger Williams speaks of him as living on ninepence a week, and upon boiled roots.* On

* "Reply to Cotton's Letter," by Roger Williams, p. 39.

settling at Amsterdam he became porter to a bookseller there, who discovered his skill in Hebrew and made it known to his countrymen. "He was a man of a thousand," says his contemporary, Governor Bradford. In the opinion of some learned members of the University of Leyden, Ainsworth "had not his better for the Hebrew tongue in the University, nor scarce in Europe." He was "of an innocent and unblamable life and conversation, of a meek spirit and calm temper." He wrote annotations on the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Song of Solomon, which are even now held in high esteem. The influence which Ainsworth and Johnson's church, and the Church at Leyden exerted upon the course of religious opinion in England was unquestionably large. The Churches of Amsterdam and Leyden not only calmly thought out, but carried out for themselves in exile, all that is comprehended in the principles of the Congregational or Independent Churches of our times. Every particular Church was a distinct society, having Christ as its prophet, priest, and king; it was a "company of people called and separated from the world by the Word of God, and bound together by voluntary profession of the faith." The congregation had power to elect their own officers, "pastors, teachers, elders, deacons, and helpers, whose maintenance should be of the free and voluntary contributions of the Church." No one was to be a member but on a public confession of his faith, neither any infants, but such as are "the seed of the faithful" by one of their parents, or under their educational government. A certificate was required if a member removed from one congregation to another.

In 1596 this Church, to correct the misstatements of their enemies, and promote the cause of true religion, issued "The confession of faith of certain English people

living in exile in the Low Countries," in English.* It was translated into Latin in 1598, and was reprinted in 1607,† dedicated to the "students of Holy Scripture in the christian Universities of Leyden, in Holland, of St. Andrew in Scotland, of Heidelberg, Geneva, and the other like famous schools of learning in the Low Countreyes, Scotland, Germany and France," and was sent to the professors of these universities. This Church consisted, after the accession of the last band of fugitives who came out with Robinson and Brewster in 1608, "of about 300 communicants,‡ before their division and breach, and "had you seen them in their beauty and order as we have done, you would have been much affected therewith." For a short period, therefore, we find the following eminent men worshipping together in this church. Henry Ainsworth, Francis Johnson, Richard Clifton, John Robinson, John Smyth, Thomas Helwisse, William Brewster, and William Bradford, who was afterwards the Governor of the New Plymouth Colony, who had been born in the village of Austerfield, and had been a member of the third Separatist Church formed at Scrooby under Richard Clifton and John Robinson's ministry. At this period Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth were respectively their "pastor" and teacher; they had four Elders—Daniel Studeley, Stanshall Mercer, George Knyveton and Christopher Bowman—and three Deacons, and one "ancient widow for a deaconess" who was above sixty years old; she visited "the sick

* A copy of this is in the British Museum, 4to. 22 pp., with preface dated 1596, another in the Lambeth Library.

† A copy of this second edition, 12mo. 55 pp., is in York Minster Library; a third edition was published.

‡ "Governor Bradford's Dialogue, New England Memorial," p. 355.

and weak, especially women, and as there was need, called out maids and young women to watch and do them other helps as their necessity did require; and if they were poor, she would gather relief for them of those that were able, or acquaint the deacons, and she was obeyed as a mother in Israel, and an officer of Christ. . . . She honoured her place, and was an ornament to the congregation; she usually sat in a convenient place in the congregation, with a *little birchen rod* in her hand, and *kept little children in great awe* from disturbing the congregation." Robinson, with Brewster, Bradford, and the rest of the Scrooby Church, seeing that some contention had arisen between John Smyth and the Church,* and finding that their good offices were not likely to be of any service, after remaining at Amsterdam for about a year,† thought it best to remove, before they were involved in any controversy, to Leyden, the end of 1608, or early in 1609, where "they continued for many years in a comfortable condition, enjoying much sweet and delightful society and spiritual comfort together in the ways of God, under the able and prudent government of Mr. John Robinson and Mr. William Brewster, grew in knowledge and other gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and lived together in peace, and love, and holiness. . . . And many came unto them from divers parts of England,

* Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation," p. 16. See also Helwy's Letter, quoted in "Evans' Baptists," Vol. I., p. 210; the correct date of the original is 12th March, 1609, the date printed in Evans is erroneous. Dr. Scheffer has kindly examined this for me. This difference of opinion was respecting the Scriptures, probably respecting the distinction between the Old and New Testament dispensations; but Smyth was convinced by the arguments of Johnson and Ainsworth, and "revoked them."

† Bradford's "History of New England Plantation," p. 16.

so as they grew a great congregation . . . not much fewer in number" than the "ancient Church" at Amsterdam. Elder Brewster was occupied in printing books to send to England. Henry Jacob had also become convinced of the scriptural character of the principles of the Separatists, and also sought refuge at Middleburg, from whence he corresponded with Robinson at Leyden. The proceedings of the Separatist Church excited a lively interest in England, and, as we have seen, their principles were actively disseminated by their tracts printed in Holland and secretly circulated. To christians in the present day, who have an intelligent knowledge of church history and of human nature, it will *not* appear extraordinary that differences of opinion should arise among a little band of men who were bent upon working out into a practical form a change in the principles of Church government so vast and momentous. Smaller matters of difference in State Churches have produced far greater dissensions and bitterness of feeling, even in times when courtesy of language and demeanour in religious controversy is the rule and not the exception. It soon became obvious that the principles of church structure which they had discovered by the careful and conscientious study of Holy Scripture, involved the necessity, for the sake of unity in the essentials of Christianity and peace in each particular association of Christians, of their dividing into distinct Churches. Their first dissension is humorously described by Bishop Hall to have been respecting the *lace* in Mrs. Francis Johnson's sleeve. Bradford tells us that she had been a merchant's wife and had a competent fortune, and that, although a godly woman, "she wore such apparel as she had formerly been used to" and "suitable to her rank;" yet, that such was the strictness and rigidness in dress of some in those times, that whalebone in the dress

or sleeves, or even starch in a collar offended them. The father and brother-in-law, because Mrs. Johnson would not cut her garments to the precise degree of plainness which they deemed christian simplicity, kept up a pertinacious opposition. The controversy raged for eleven years, and after four years' contention, the Church excommunicated George Johnson and his father, whom no reasonable "reformation in apparel" would satisfy.

Owing to these and other dissensions in the church, Francis Johnson altered his views upon the important point of the government of the church. He now considered the government should be vested in Elders chosen by the congregation, and that these should be both "Ruling Elders" and "Teaching Elders," while Ainsworth considered it should be vested in the Church of which the Elders are a part. Robinson concurred with Ainsworth. They deemed the Bishops or Elders to be the only ordinary governors, but they were not to be "lords over God's heritage" as if "the church could not *be* without them." The importance of the question was not measured in their minds by the present issue. A hierarchy in the Church of Christ originated in this very thing, viz., that the people did not maintain their right of voting on equal terms with their officers. "If we should let the true practice of the Gospel go, posterity after us being brought into bondage, might justly blame and curse *us*, that would not stand up for the right of the people."*

* "An Animadversion to Mr. R. Clifton," &c., by Henry Ainsworth, Amsterdam, 1613, p. 125, U.L.C. "Touching the ministry, it is said, 'A man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven,' John iii. 27. Now to the ministers it is given to feed, guide, and govern the Church, but not *themselves to be the Church*, and to challenge the power of the same in things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. . . . Such giving place to the usurpation of the ministers was the means of Antichrist's

The advice of the Church at Leyden was sought, and Robinson suggested a wise and salutary middle course, viz., that all business of the Church should be first considered and resolved on by the Pastors and Elders privately, and then submitted ultimately to the church. This controversy took place during the year 1609, and in the year 1610, on December 15th and 16th, Ainsworth and those who agreed with him quietly withdrew, and Francis Johnson and Richard Clifton, who agreed upon the subject of the decision of all matters by the Elders, formed a distinct Church. The system of government which they advocated did not seem to work well, for differences again arose in this Church. Some years after, Johnson removed to Embden with a portion of his Church. It seems probable that Ainsworth's Church was strengthened by this proceeding, and by Clyfton's death. Ainsworth died the end of 1622, or early in 1623. The celebrated John Canne, who afterwards became Pastor of the Baptist Church in Bristol, was Pastor of Johnson's Church in 1632 and 1634.* Ainsworth is described by Bradford as having "an excellent gift of teaching and opening the Scriptures," as "very modest and amiable . . . of an innocent and unblameable life and conversation, of a meek spirit, and a calm temper, void of passion, and not easily provoked;" while one who had lived with him at Amsterdam, says "he lived and died unblameably, and I am thoroughly persuaded that his soul

beginning and climbing to his pre-eminence, which, had the people resisted at first, and practised the Gospel in the order set by Christ, he could not have prevailed . . . if the holding otherwise in judgment should let the true practice of the Gospel go, posterity after us being brought into bondage, might justly blame and curse us, that would not stand for the right of the people in that which we acknowledge to be their due."

* For these dates my authority is "The Life of Ainsworth." Edinburgh, 1709. p. 34.

rests with his Saviour." In 1608 (that is about two years previously to the division of the ancient Church of Amsterdam) differences arose between John Smyth and Francis Johnson, Ainsworth, Clifton, and John Robinson, which placed him at issue with both "the ancient Church" at Amsterdam and the Church at Leyden. Smyth and Thomas Helwys, John Morton and some thirty-six other persons, separated from the Church. Helwys* and Smyth had associated in England. Smyth mentions that he ministered to his necessities when he was sick at Bashforth† (probably Babworth, a village in the neighbourhood of Scrooby, and of which Clifton was then rector). John Smyth had associated with Hans de Rys and Lubbert Gerrits, celebrated ministers among the Mennonite churches in Amsterdam, and the ground on which he retired from the "Ancient Church" was, first, the importance of baptism being administered, as a sign of admission into the Church, to *adults or persons of competent age to understand its meaning*, and not to *infants* who happened to be "the seed of the faithful." Secondly, of the entire distinction between the Old and New Testament. Both portions of the Sacred Records had hitherto, by all the Puritans and the Separatist and Brownist Churches, been considered as equally binding upon Christians. There were some other matters of difference, but he went even beyond this; he renounced the opinions of Calvin and espoused those of Arminius. These opinions were then considered to be heresy of the deepest dye, and they raised for him a host of enemies.

* It seems probable that Thomas Helwys belonged to either the Scrooby or the Gainsborough Church. "Joan Elwisse, the wife of Thomas Helwys," being prosecuted before the Ecclesiastical Court at York on July 26th, 1604.—"Waddington's Congregational History," p. 163.

† "Smyth's Confession and Life," York Minster Library.

We have here the commencement of another important religious movement in England. A tendency was now manifesting itself for Independent and Brownist Churches to become Baptist Churches. John Smyth and Thomas Helwys having adopted the opinions of the Mennonites, propagated their views and practices, and thus became the founders of the English General, or Arminian Baptist Churches. Bishop Hall, in his controversy with John Robinson, pastor of the Leyden branch of the Separatist Church, says to his opponent, "There is no remedy, you must go forward into Anabaptism, or come back to us" (*i.e.*, the Church of England); "all your Rabbins cannot answer the charge of your re-baptized brother John Smyth —'If we be a true church you must retain us; if not, you must re-baptize. If our baptism is good, then is our constitution good.' He tells you *true*, your station is unsafe, either you must forward to him or back to us."* "Whereupon," we are told, "this so alarmed those with which Mr. Smyth held communion that they cast him out of the Church." The force and piquancy of this turned upon the point, that Robinson and Ainsworth held "that such as be of *the seed of the faithful*, or *under the government of any of the Church*, were, even in their infancy, to be received to baptism, and made partakers of the sign of God's covenant made with the faithful and their seed through all generations."† Where, argued Bishop Hall, will be the difference between the Church of England and the Church of the Separation, in the course of a few years? You will have as many unfaithful members as we have.

After Smyth, Helwys, and their company had separated

* Bishop Hall's Works, Vol. ix., pp. 400, 385. Ed. J. Ratt, London, 1808.

† Article XXXV. of the "Confession of the Church of Amsterdam."

from the communion of the ancient Separatist Church, the first action, which they took in forming themselves into a Church state, has excited much interest and comment. The materials for a clear and connected history of Smyth's conduct have only lately come to light. It is important to mark the features of the rise of by far the largest section of the English (originally non-immersionist) Baptist Churches. Robinson states * that Smyth baptized *himself* and afterwards Mr. Helwisse, and thus qualified themselves for the administration of baptism to their church. This has been doubted by many writers, because of its intrinsic improbability, and because, from their point of view, there seemed to be something irrational or extravagant in a man baptizing *himself*.† It had, however, a rigid logical consistency from the point of view which Smyth occupied. The subject has, however, been set at rest by a manuscript document, discovered by Dr. Scheffer in Amsterdam, by which it appears that Smyth and thirty-two persons, wishing to unite themselves to the Waterlander Mennonite Church in Amsterdam, of which Lubbert Gerritts was Pastor, probably in the early part of the year 1609, confessed their error, "that they undertook to baptize *themselves* contrary to the order appointed by Christ." Thomas Helwys, John Morton, and two others still defended the propriety of such

* "Of Religious Communion, Public and Private, with silencing of the clamour raised by Mr. Thomas Helwisse against our retaining the baptism received in England, and administering of Baptism to infants. As also a Survey of the Confession of Faith published in certain conclusions by the remainders of Mr. Smyth's company." By John Robinson, 1614. Reprint by R. Ashton, London, 1851, p. 168.

† See "Discovery of the Errors of the English Anabaptists," by E. Jessop, "who some time walked in the same errors with them," p. 65, margin, London, 1623. "Mr. Smith baptized himself first and then Mr. Helwes, and John Morton with the rest. . . . I would now demand of you your warrant for a man to baptize himself." This work is in U. L. Cant.

a course, viz., that “ whosoever shall now be stirred up by the same spirit, to preach the same word, and men thereby being converted, may, according to John, his example, wash them with water, and who can forbid ? ” The question of the *manner* of baptism does not come up, and there can hardly be a doubt that the practice of immersion had not then arisen, and was not deemed important. Helwys and Morton take the view, that if elders must ordain elders, and if elders are alone able to baptize, this is to go back to the idea of an “ apostolic succession,” and he asks, “ Hath the Lord thus restrained His Spirit, His Word, and ordinances, as to make particular men lords over them, or the keepers of them ? God forbid.” It is contrary to the “ liberty of the Gospel, which is free for all men, at all times and in all places ; yea, so our Saviour Christ doth testify, wheresoever, whosoever, and whenssoever two or three are gathered together in his name, there is He in the midst of them.” * Smyth, on the other hand, held that it was because he *then* thought that there was “ no Church to whom we could join with a good conscience,” that “ therefore we might *baptize ourselves* ; ” but when he and Helwys admitted that the Mennonite Churches were “ true Churches,” and had true ministers, “ from which baptism may orderly be had,” it was not proper for “ two or three private persons “ to baptize ” and set up churches, without first joining themselves to “ true Churches ” already existing. “ I deny,” he says, “ all succession, except in the Truth, and I hold that we are not to violate the order of the primitive Church except necessity urge a dispensation.”

* See letter signed Thomas Helwys, William Pigott, Thomas Seamer, John Murton, dated Amsterdam, 12th March, 1609, in the archives of the Mennonite Church, and published by Evans. [Dr. Scheffer kindly re-copied this for me.]

It "was not lawful for every one that seeketh the Truth to baptize, for then there might be as many Churches as couples in the world." * John Smyth and forty-one persons signed a confession of faith, drawn up by Hans de Rys, and approved by Lubbert Gerritts, the Pastor of the Waterlander Mennonite Church. This was found by Dr. Scheffer in the Mennonite archives at Amsterdam, and is published.† This is nearly a verbatim translation of Hans de Rys and Lubbert Gerritt's confession of faith,‡ and Hans de Rys says, concerning it, "This short confession I first wrote on entreaty, and on behalf of several Englishmen fled from England for conscience sake." §

Some questions, however, arose among the Mennonites, and eleven of the forty-two English signatures are obliterated, which tends to show that some members of the English Church were dissatisfied, and the records of the Mennonite Church mention no other union with the English than the union of the 18th of January, 1615. The first Baptist (non-immersionist) Church formed in London by Helwys, Smyth's co-pastor, was therefore formed *prior* to the union of the parent Baptist Church in Amsterdam with the Mennonite Church. This does not, however, alter the fact, first, that they coincided in all the views of the Waterlander Mennonites,|| and signed the confession of the

* "Smyth's Confession of his Errors," recently discovered in York Minster Library.

† "Evans' Baptists," vol. i., p. 245.

‡ "Schyn's History of the Mennonites," p. 172, published at Amsterdam in 1723, in Latin.

§ "Schyn's History," Vol. ii. p. 157, line 35, Dutch edition. Amsterdam, 1744.

|| This is confirmed by the tract recently found in York Minster Library, "Smyth's Life." The Confession consists of 100 prepositions. This is stated by Robinson ("Religious Communion," 1614, Ashton's reprint, p. 236) to be Smyth's, and p. 237, to be published by the "remainders of Mr. Smyth's company *after his death*," i.e., August, 1612. It was found in MS. in the Mennonite Library, and a translation published in Evans, vol. i., p. 257.

celebrated Hans de Rys, and joined the Church of Lubbert Gerritts. Secondly—That those who were members of the congregations founded by Helwys's Church in England, were accepted as *members* by the Mennonites as soon as they resided in Holland, without baptism or any ceremony whatsoever; and, thirdly, that these Churches corresponded one with another, and that the English Churches agreed to refer their differences to the decision of the Mennonite Church; and that in 1626 there were Churches corresponding with the Waterlander Mennonites of Amsterdam, in London, Lincoln, Sarum, Coventry and Tiverton.* It appears from this correspondence, that a slight difference of opinion respecting war and the use of arms had, even then, commenced, although "some of us," it is said "are of the same with you" with regard to war. We may therefore conclude that the first Arminian Baptist Churches in England were really Mennonite, and that at least, in some of these Churches, the doctrines, practices, and discipline of the Mennonites were practised. This link in the evidence, at once explains the origin of many of the new and strange religious opinions and practices which seem at once to have burst into vigorous life, when the civil war in England had fairly commenced. There does not seem to be any evidence that the method of baptism introduced into England by Smyth and Helwys, differed in its method of administration from the baptism generally adopted by the ancient Mennonites, viz., by pouring a little water upon the head of the person baptized. The practice of immersion appears to have been introduced in England, on the 12th September, 1633.†

* Evans, vol. ii., p. 26.

† It is termed in the original documents quoted by Crosby, Vol. i., p. 149, a "new baptism;" and also by Featly in the "Dippers Dipt," in 1645, "a new leaven" (see

In the Independent Church, established by Henry Jacob in 1616, to which we shall afterwards allude, several persons being convinced of the necessity of *entirely* setting aside infant baptism, even to the “seed of the faithful” (as administered in Ainsworth’s church), and administering it to such only who professed faith in Christ, desired to be dismissed from that congregation, and it was agreed that they should be considered as a distinct Church.* This new Church then conferred upon the proper method of administering this ordinance in its primitive purity, and decided

p. 182), and says that none of the ancient Anabaptists practised it. In 1642 Edward Barber wrote “The Vanity of Childish Baptism,” in which it is proved that baptism is dipping, and that those who have baptism *without* dipping have not a New Testament baptism. Pagitt also, in his “Heresiography,” London, 1648, p. 33, says, “yea, at this day they have a new crochet come into their heads, that all that have not been *plunged* nor dipt *under* water are not truly baptised, and *these also* they re-baptize;” also 669 p 22, No. 59, folio sheets B.M. “Anti-Quakerism, or, a Character of the Quakers from its Original and First Cause,” written by a pious gentleman who hath been thirteen years amongst the Separatists, &c.

Verse 13. Then did you muse and cast your care
All for an administrator,
But *here in England* none was seen
That used aught but sprinkling.

Verse 14. At length you heard men say
That there were saints in Silesia,
Who, ever since the Apostles’ time,
Had kept this ordinance pure, divine;
Hither, alas! you sent in *haste*,
And thus you did some treasure waste,
But when your messengers came there,
You were deceived as we are here,
“But this they told you in good deed,
That they of baptism had need,” &c.

This seems to indicate that the English Baptist Church first applied to a Church in Silesia. It is believed the only “Saints” in Silesia were the followers of Caspar Schwenckfeld, who disused baptism with water, and received only those who they considered had received spiritual baptism.

* “Crosby,” vol. i., pp. 148, 149.

that this was to *immerse* or *plunge* the entire person of the recipient, hearing that it had been practised in the Netherlands from the year 1619 by the Collegianten, who had, it is thought, received this method of baptism from the Polish Baptists, who in their turn had received it from the Swiss Baptists, by whom it was practised as early as 1525.* The Collegianten were a body of christians closely connected with the Waterlander Mennonites, although holding some peculiar views which will be hereafter explained. This English Church, after sending in the first instance to the "Saints" in Silesia, commissioned Richard Blount, who understood Dutch, to act for them; and John Batten, a well-known Collegiant, the teacher of a congregation of Collegiants at Leyden, baptized him by immersion. They thus overcame the difficulty of finding a proper administrator,† because, as Crosby quotes, "though some in this nation rejected the baptism of infants, yet they had not that they knew of, revived the ancient custom of *immersion*," i.e., in England. After this period baptism is not only defined in the Baptist confessions of faith as proper to be administered to persons professing faith in Christ, but it is also stated that the proper method is by *immersion*.‡

* The Collegianten were the first persons who practised immersion in the Netherlands. John Geesteranus was the first person who was *dipt* at Rynsburg. (Van Nimwegen, pp. 39, 48; Oudaen, pp. 36, 37. I give these quotations on the authority of Dr. Scheffer of Amsterdam.) The Unitarian Baptists of Poland had offered this man a professorship at Rakow. J. Kessler's "Sabbata," a MS. printed by the Historical Society at St. Gallen, Switzerland, it appears that Uliman, afterwards a teacher in the Church of Anabaptists at St. Gallen, was *dipt*. Cornelius Geschichte der Munster "Aufruhrs," ii. pp. 32, 33, 36, 37, 64. John Denk, the friend of Ludwig Hetzer, and his co-operator in the version of the prophetic books of the Old Testament, 1527, was a member of this congregation. The Swiss Unitarian Baptists sought a refuge in Poland, and in 1550 the rite of immersion was practised in Poland.

† "Crosby," vol. i., pp. 101, 102.

‡ See the Confession of Faith of 1646, Articles 39 and 40. This was the confession of faith of this Church, and is the earliest in which the *method* of baptism is defined.

Considerable light may, we feel sure, be yet thrown upon the early history of the churches of the Commonwealth, by a minute and accurate study of the state of religion in Holland during the half century prior to the struggle between the King and Parliament. We shall therefore notice the tenets, mode of worship, and church discipline of the Mennonites, and the Collegianten, who were closely allied to them, and we shall thus be able to account for some of the peculiar opinions and practices of the General or Arminian Baptists, and the Society of Friends of that day.

It has often been remarked, by those who have studied the early history of the Society of Friends, that there were religionists in England who held views similar to those of "the Friends," prior to the preaching of George Fox. These were the General or Arminian Baptist (originally non-immersionist) Churches, which were founded by Thomas Helwys, John Morton, and their companions.*

* It is certain that there existed in England, prior to this, "Anabaptist" Churches. In August, 1536, there was a great gathering of the Anabaptists near Buckholt, in Westphalia, after the fall of Munster, to compose their differences upon the subject of the bearing of arms in order to further the interests of the kingdom of Christ, and respecting some other matters. The violent party were represented by Battenburg, who approved the views of the Munster faction, and it is well to note that this man regarded the *tenet of adult baptism as quite unimportant* compared with the extirpation by the sword of the enemies of the "Kingdom of God," and had abolished it among his followers previously to this meeting. The party in direct antagonism were represented by Ubbo Phillips (although he was not present), who opposed all war and revenge as antichristian, and maintained the purely spiritual character of Christ's Kingdom. The third party represented was that of Melchior Hofman. David Joris, the originator of a fourth party, acted the part of mediator, and subtilely maintained that if the Battenburgers were right, *the time was not come* to set up the "Kingdom of the Elect," and that for the present, therefore, the power must be left in the hands of the hostile and unbelieving magistracy. There can be little doubt that the Continental Baptist movement, beginning prior to or simultaneously with the Reformation, was used for purely political purposes by the revolutionary party, and that this meeting

We have shown that these Churches were substantially Mennonite. That some of these Churches gradually altered their views cannot be doubted, but that many of them substantially held to the Mennonite faith and practice, will be shown in the course of the history. So closely do these views correspond with those of George Fox, that we are compelled to view him as the unconscious exponent of the doctrine, practice, and discipline of the ancient and stricter party of the Dutch Mennonites, at a period when, under the pressure of the times, some deviation took place among the General Baptists from their original principles.*

at Buckholt was the commencement, not only of the disentanglement of the Baptist Churches from these political aims, but of the active propagation of the great idea concerning the entire distinction between the province of the Church and that of the State. (a) This was afterwards developed by Menno, who was a follower of Ubbo Phillips. A certain Englishman of the name of "Henry" was very active in promoting this meeting, and himself paid the travelling expenses of the deputies. England was represented by John Mathias, of Middleburg (who was afterwards burnt at London for his adhesion to the tenets of Melchior Hofman). It is interesting to notice that the representatives of England were very indignant at the loose views of the Munster party. [See Dr. Nippold's "Life of D. Joris," in the *Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie*, vol. 1863, pp. 52 to 55.] The result of this conference was, that the power of the unruly Anabaptists was completely destroyed. See Roosen's "Life of Menno," Leipsic; also Krohn's "History of Fanatischen Wiedertäuffer," and of "Melchior Hofman," Leipsic, 1758, pp. 327, 333. Krohn's supposition, that this "Henry" was Henrick Nielaes, is quite beside the mark, as may be seen by comparing the dates.

(a) In 1572, Stryke in his "Ecclesiastical Memorials" informs us, Whitgift found that the Anabaptists who had fled in 1568 from Alva's persecution, taught "that the civil magistrate had no authority in ecclesiastical matters."

* Several ministers of the Society of Friends, who have travelled in Russia and elsewhere in modern times, have been struck by the striking resemblance between the Mennonite Churches and the Society of Friends.

CHAPTER V.

A SHORT HISTORY OF MENNO, THE FOUNDER OF THE CONTINENTAL MENNONITE BAPTISTS. HIS RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES, TESTIMONY AGAINST WAR, OATHS, AND FRIVOLITY IN DRESS, ETC. STRICT CHURCH DISCIPLINE. PRACTICE OF SILENT PRAYER IN THE RELIGIOUS WORSHIP OF THE MENNONITES; RISE OF THE COLLEGIANTEN OF RYNSBURG. THE RESEMBLANCE OF THEIR VIEWS AND PRACTICES TO THOSE OF THE "PLYMOUTH BRETHREN" OF THE PRESENT DAY.

It must be borne in mind that the great principles of religious liberty, and those views of Church government which led to the formation of the Independent and Baptist Churches, (and, as we shall subsequently show, the Society of Friends) new and strange as they were in England, and leading to important changes, had been practically worked out in Holland for many years. At this period Holland was in the enjoyment of a large measure of religious liberty, which had been purchased by the blood and awful sufferings of the martyrs of the ancient Mennonite and other Reformed Churches.*

* The 13th Article of the Act of Union of Utrecht, 1579, the Magna Charta of the Dutch Republic, stipulated that the provinces of Holland and Zealand were competent to grant so much religious liberty as they thought fit, and the other provinces could restrict it according to what the quietness and prosperity of the country, the right of the clergy, and the judicature of the magistrate should require, *provided that everyone privately enjoyed full liberty of religion, and for religion's sake*, neither should be troubled or examined. The Calvinistic Reformed Church was the State Church, and all other religions were tolerated.

Menno Simons, was born in the year 1492, at Witmarsum, a village half-way between Bolsward and Harlingen, and was ordained a priest of the Romish Church at Pinningen in West Friesland, in Frisia, a province of Holland, in 1516, and died in 1559.* He had witnessed the constancy of the Baptists under persecution. He conferred with Luther, Bucer, and Bullinger, on the subject of infant baptism, but they all differed one from another in the grounds on which they supported the practice. It was, however, as he tells us, "alone by the reading and meditation on Holy Scripture," and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, that he came to the knowledge of the "true baptism and supper of the Lord," and he began "publicly to teach from the pulpit the doctrine of true repentance;" and on the 11th January, 1536, he left the Romish Church, joined himself to a Baptist community of which Obbe Phillips (who ordained Menno a teacher and Elder) was a member.† In 1537 or 1538 he published his third work—"The Beautiful and Fundamental Doctrine of the Word of God : admonishing all who call themselves christians to the heavenly regeneration and new birth, without which no

* These dates are from those given by Menno's own daughter to Peter Jan Twisck (see his Chronicle, vol. ii., pp. 1075 and 1201), and are incorrectly given in B. K. Roosen's "Life of Menno." Leipsic, 1848.

† Obbe Phillips had been admitted a member by the messengers sent by Jan Mathys Backer, and he was sent out by Melchior Hoffman, who again, was a disciple of the Baptist congregation at Strasburg which originated from the dissenting members of Zwingle's Church in Switzerland, (a) and we are thus carried back to the rise of the Baptists in Switzerland. There is not the slightest *proof* of any connection between the Waldenses and the Mennonites, although asserted by a long list of Dutch historians, e.g., Galenus Abrahams and H. Schyn. The statement originated with Jacob Mehring in 1647.

(a) See Jehring's "Gründliche Historie of the Controversies of the Baptists and Mennonites," 1720, p. 232, &c.

one can be a true christian." In this work he speaks of the new birth "which is begun by God, the Word "and Holy Spirit, of which the most certain fruit is "a new life, and a walking in true repentance and all "the christian virtues, according to the example of our "Lord. . . . These regenerate persons constitute the "true Christian Church, who worship Christ as their only "and true king, who fight not with swords and carnal "weapons, but only with spiritual, *i.e.*, with the Word of "God and Holy Spirit. They seek no kingdom but that of "grace. They conduct themselves as citizens of heaven. "Their doctrine is the word of the Lord, and everything "not taught therein they reject. They exercise, after the "example and institution of Christ, the sacred supper in "commemoration of the death and benefits of Christ. "Their Church discipline is extended to all who are "impenitent sinners, without distinction, and they withdraw "draw from perverse apostates according to the Word of "God. They lament every day their daily sins and carnal "infirmities, and by this course are always profiting. They "have no other justification than that which is by faith of "Christ, and which is of God by faith. They leave the "things that are behind, and press towards the mark of "their high calling," &c. His sixth work is entitled, "The Evident Doctrine of the Word of the Lord, concerning the spiritual resurrection, and the new heavenly birth." The substance is stated to be, "Awake out of sleep and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Dirk Philips, a Mennonite minister coeval with Simon Menno, in a tract called, "Brevis Confessio de Incarnatione Domini nostri Jesu Christi," also expresses himself much in the language in which Fox expressed his views. He says, "it is not sufficient to confess and know all these things,

but we must accept this Jesus Christ as the Eternal Word and Incorruptible *Seed* of the Eternal God the Father, by the Holy Spirit *in ourselves* to preserve and retain Him, for in Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (Menno denies also (as Fox afterwards) that his followers are a "sect." He taught the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, but objected to the words "Trinity" and "Person," which he held to be unscriptural. He held that God created no creature to condemnation, nor desired the death of a sinner, but sought his repentance and eternal salvation. Menno held that no christian could swear or carry arms, or wage war, or revenge himself in any way whatever, and that magistrates should be obeyed in all things not contrary to the Word of God. Since the office of a magistrate compelled men to use the sword, to take an oath, and other matters contrary to the duty of Christians, it was impossible for a Christian man rightly to fulfil it. Prior to the meeting of the Continental Anabaptists at Buckholt in Westphalia * in August, 1536, the differences between them did not take a definite form, but after that period there was no fellowship between the rebellious Anabaptists of Luther's time, and the followers of Menno. Menno, in January, 1537, placed himself at the head of those who entirely protested against the violent and fanatical party.) The Mennonites had therefore no relations with the followers of Nicholas Stork, Mark Stubner, Martin Cellerarius and Thomas Munzer. The tenets of the followers of these men, and their manner of life, were wholly different from those of the Mennonites, for the former indulged in enthusiastic revelations which superseded Holy Scripture, rejected the liberal arts, abolished

* See Note, p. 76 of this work.

all books but sacred books, contended for a community of goods, and maintained that their mission was "to build the kingdom of Zion," and to destroy the office of the magistrate, and by armed force to set up the kingdom of Christ, for they allowed the use of the sword, and waged war.

It does not appear that the Church discipline of the Mennonites was commenced by Menno; it was received from the Swiss Baptists, but was doubtless improved and rendered more efficient by him. He was very active in enforcing the importance of Church discipline upon his followers by his writings, and held that the outward and visible "church vanished, where Church discipline is not exercised," and that "the words and works of the members of a Church should agree." He was very successful in his ministry, which he exercised not only in his own church, but in the neighbouring ones, and the result of this was that a number of compact and vigorous churches were founded. He laboured in Embden, in Cologne, in Wismar and Holstein, as well as in Frisland. His works show him to have been a man of learning and ability. He gave up all for Christ, and lived a life of incessant labour and suffering, from the persecution to which he was subjected. The unsparing opposition he received from the clergy, supported by the State, naturally caused him to take an unfavourable view of their motives. "I fear," he wrote, "that all who so serve for pay, are priests of the high places," 2 Kings xii., "False prophets," Mat. vii., "thieves and murderers."

(We have now seen, that some of the principal points both of doctrine and practice, which occupied the mind of Fox, were advocated by Menno. The work of Christ in the person of the Holy Spirit; the Word and the Light, as a real, personal, active agent in the conversion of sinners, and conferring on the christian the power to exhibit a holy

life and walk before the world, and the absolute denial of the title of "christian" to persons who evidently do not so live, were characteristic of the teaching of the two men.

The Mennonites strongly condemned infant baptism, and made use of adult baptism. It was administered by pouring water on the head of the person received into the visible church, who was believed, on credible evidence of a change of life, to be washed, cleansed, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God,—not as conferring the slightest grace, but as emblematical of the state of the believer. The Lord's Supper they received in the same sense, as a thing which Christ has ordered to be done, not claiming for the outward act any ritual efficacy. It was kept twice or thrice a year among the Waterlander Mennonites. The washing of the saints' feet they also considered as a command of the Lord.* The Waterlander Mennonites, however, at the period when their views were promulgated in England, did *not* practise this ceremony. The agreement of their membership did not rest upon a purely doctrinal basis in the shape of any creed, but on the general sense of the Church, or Churches, of the plain meaning of the New Testament Scripture. The Mennonite Confessions of Faith were, as in the case of the early Baptist Churches in this country, generally used for the purpose of avoiding misapprehension, and to prevent the ignorant abuse with which they were loaded from misleading the public.† They denied any oath

* This practice of the Mennonites is mentioned in "Barclay's Apology," in connection with the Lord's Supper.

† In 1676 an ancient member made a declaration before the notary, that the Waterlander Mennonites never had a confession of faith, and that Hans de Rys' confession was merely a private action of his, and that sixty or seventy English people wished to join themselves, but did not like to do so till they knew what the Waterlanders believed. L. F. Rues' "Aufrichtige Nachrichten der Mennoniten," Jena, 1743, p. 93.

to be lawful to a Christian. They considered all war, or bearing of arms, or the resisting an unrighteous power, to be unlawful, and that all revenge is forbidden to the Christian. No merchant was allowed to arm his ship. No appeal to the Courts of Law was allowed among the Brethren, and all disputes were referred to the Church, or to arbitrators chosen by the Church, excepting when a brother was acting as a guardian, &c. They were bound to submit to human government as an ordinance of God, but Christ was the sole head of the Church. No office in the Church conferred headship. "We are *brethren* in the Church, not masters, or servants." They excommunicated all who married unregenerate persons, and at one time, those who belonged to other religious societies, and put them out of the Church.* All unnecessary ornaments in dress, even buttons and buckles not absolutely useful, were disused, and they were generally precise and simple in their dress and the furniture of their houses. They believed that Elders (exercising the varied gifts of "prophets, pastors, teachers, helps, and bishops"), and Deacons were the only two classes of divinely established officers of a Church. The deacons had charge of the Church collections, and were often teachers, generally remaining in the office for three or four years, and sometimes for life. They sat with the Elders in the ministers' meeting. They considered that human learning does not qualify for the ministry, and they did not allow their children to go to universities, lest they should be injured in their spiritual life. Their ministers wore the same dress as other members. They held that the calling of ministers must be either "immediately" from

* This is now abolished among the modern Mennonites.

God, or through the members of the church.* No hire should be given to ministers; if they were poor and had no fortune, the congregations assisted them with the means of living—special help was however given them; in some instances a house or shop was hired for them.† Their meeting houses were very plain, and had galleries or platforms where the ministers sat. In their worship they first sang a hymn.‡ The practice of regularly singing the psalms was not followed. They then, both ministers and people, engaged in silent prayer, the men kneeling and the women sitting, till one of the preachers rose. After he had finished, they again engaged in silent prayer, and they ended by singing a hymn. Prior to 1663 there was a “liberty of prophesying” or preaching in the congregation, irrespectively of the preaching of those in office.§

Silent prayer in worship was practised from the rise of the Mennonite congregations; there is no historical notice of its introduction. It was falling into disuse among the Waterlander, the Flemish and old Frisian Mennonites, in 1723.|| The practice of the ministers regularly praying

* “Von Gott unmittelbar,” p. 35, “Life of Menno Symons,” or “Roosen,” p. 35, Leipsic, 1848.

† Menno says, “The true Teachers and Pastors must live by the labour of their hands, and God will care for them in their necessity;” “they are distinguished from the preachers of the world who run of themselves—who seek sure incomes, benefices, &c.”

‡ This practice can be traced as early as 1574. Reitze Aitzes, burnt at Leeuwarden in Frisia, in 1574, speaks of a dispute wth a minister of the Reformed Church, who reproached Reitze Aitzes that “the Reformed sung the Psalms of David; the Mennoniites, on the other hand, *Hymns*, composed not by God but by men.” There are other indications in their martyrologies, that in ancient times the singing of *Hymns* was the common rule in their worship.

§ L. Klinckhaenar, “Liberty of Speaking in the Congregations of Believers,” 1655. “The Custom of Liberty of Speaking among the Mennonites,” 1663.

|| “Schyn’s History of the Mennonites,” Ed. Lat., 1723, p. 40.

aloud was first introduced among the Waterlander Mennonites by Hans de Rys. They all, however, approved vocal prayer in the congregation, but they did not approve it as "a law and constant rule whereof nothing is to be found in Holy Scripture."* Silent prayer was, however, practised by many congregations of the Waterlander Mennonites in 1661, and appears to have been the rule. The custom of silent prayer gradually declined, and was finally abolished about twenty years ago. The use of the Bible in the Mennonite congregations, by the ministers, existed from the earliest times, and in some instances three or four brethren were chosen for the express purpose of reading a chapter of the Bible before the time of silent prayer. They objected to the practice of commencing a sermon by reading a text.† At a burial any of the preachers were free to speak or not. Instead of a spoken "grace" before meals, they made a long solemn pause for silent thanksgiving.‡ Their members were composed of those only who professed faith in Christ, and application was made either verbally or in writing; sometimes they were examined before the meeting of Elders and Deacons; afterwards "they were presented to the Meeting for Discipline or Church-Meeting" by the Elders, and every brother in the meeting was asked if he had any objection to this person as a member. They were then baptised before the congregation, being previously

* See tract by Jacob Jansen, in reply to a tract by F. Lansberger, Pastor of the Reformed Church, attacking the Flemish Mennonites at Rotterdam, in 1596, for their "strange and anti-scriptural method of silent prayer."

† This was objected to in the same manner by the followers of Fox and the Early Independents. J. Lydius mentions it in "Historie der Beoerten van Engeland," 1649, 2nd Ed., p. 78.

‡ This custom has been practised in Holland from time immemorial, not only among the Mennonites, but among the Calvinists and Lutherans.

asked if they confessed their sins, and looked to God for deliverance, through Christ, from the punishment and the defilement of sin, and if they have taken the resolution to serve God all their life long. They were next asked if they believed according to the Scriptures, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, and His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and coming again to judgment; and lastly, whether they approved the teaching of the congregation to be according to God's Word. Menno held that Christian parents were bound to "lead their children to Christ," and "not to spare any trouble to bring them to the worship of God;" that "by teaching, exhortation, discipline, and example," they were bound, "continuing steadfastly in prayer for them," to train them up in a Christian life and conversation, and that the Church was bound to take charge of orphans. Children, however, were not to be baptised, or admitted to the visible Church until they were of sufficient age to comprehend the duties of a Church member. There were two Church meetings; the meeting of Elders, Teachers, and Deacons, and that of the Members. At the former, subjects eventually brought before the congregation were discussed, although the power of determination lay entirely with the members. At this meeting, the doctrine and conduct of the preachers were discussed, and an appeal made to the congregation if needful; the conduct and behaviour of the flock came under notice, they were warned and encouraged, and the supply was arranged of teachers, ministers, or elders to help congregations needing their ministrations. At the meeting of Church members was transacted their discipline. The women were not admitted to it.* Each of their

* Originally women were *not* admitted by Fox to Church Meetings. See p.

churches was independent of other churches in the exercise of the discipline. The elders were chosen with the unanimous consent of the congregation, but teachers exercised their gifts with a general consent. There were often from four to six ministers in each church. The subjects which came under the notice of the church meeting for discipline were, first, those members "who having once been illuminated and confessed the doctrine of Christ," fall away and become heretics. Secondly—"those who manifest the works of the flesh." Thirdly—"those who marry those who are without." *

Although the independency of each congregation was strictly maintained, the tie of mutual love and brotherhood between these congregations was very strong, and they sent delegates to a yearly meeting of the Churches, where they decided upon measures concerning the support of the poor,† the maintenance of public worship, and the distribution of the ministers to congregations which needed them ; and any causes of dissension which could not be settled in the particular congregations were brought here for settlement by way of appeal. The Yearly Meeting could not, however, constrain the independent congregations, but only advise, beseech, and press their duty in the matter upon them. These Yearly Meetings were not always held in the same place, but circulated. This may have given rise to the "Circulating Yearly Meetings" amongst the Early Friends, which existed prior to the central or London Yearly Meeting. The travelling expenses of the teachers

* Article XVIII of "Confession of the Frisian and German Confession of 1626." See pp. 79, 87, 105 to 107. "Schyn's History," 1723.

† Menno expressed himself on the subject of the poor almost in the words used by Fox a century later—that the churches were to "allow no beggar to exist among them." Roosen's "Life of Menno," p. 68.

who were engaged in supplying the needs of the congregations who were imperfectly supplied with ministers, were contributed by the Yearly Meeting of the united Churches. They also supplied the pecuniary necessities of the poorer congregations. Although the different Mennonite churches do not all unite in one Yearly Synod, they so unite for common purposes in case of persecution or other suffering, and summon delegates from all the churches to a meeting in Amsterdam. In 1743 there were about 197 congregations of Mennonites in Holland and Belgium, and 400 teachers. The old Flemish, the Frisian, the united Waterlander and Flemish, appear always to have been on friendly terms. There were some in Menno's days (probably the followers of Caspar Schwenkfeld) who "urged the inward baptism and rejected the outward." Dirk Philip exhorts his fellow believers to beware of those who contemn all external worship of God and institutions as "trifles or toys," and he says they quoted Gal. vi. 15, in support of their views, "by which they thought to weaken and reject baptism and other divine rites."* We shall, in a future chapter, show the connection between the followers of Caspar Schwenkfeld and the Mennonites.

In 1619 a new sect arose at Rynsburg, among the Mennonites, called Collegianten (they were called so from their meetings, which were termed Collegia). Four brothers, John, Adrian, William and Gisbrecht Van der Kodde, who lived in the villages of Ugstgeist, Reinsburg, and Warmund, were its founders. William left behind him various learned works. His name as an author is well known as Gulielmus Coddaeus. Like the other Mennonites they were Arminian in doctrine. They agreed in most points with other

* "Schyn's History," part ii., pp. 207, 208. Ed. 1723.

Mennonites. They maintained the testimonies respecting war and oaths, and they revived the ancient practice (among the Mennonites) of a full liberty of preaching or prophesying; *i.e.*, it was not restricted to elders or teachers chosen from the congregation, and they administered baptism by *immersion*. Their views closely approximated in some respects to those of the "Plymouth Brethren" of our days. They insisted upon the suspension of all controversies, and a toleration of all opinions which are not condemned in the Bible. They acknowledged all spiritually minded Christians, admitted them to the table of the Lord, and allowed them to sing and speak in their meetings. All were at liberty to pass judgment upon, or to dissent from, the preaching of another. They required no conformity of religious opinions. They were persons who loved Christ and accepted the Holy Scriptures, who met together for the worship of God. They extended the right hand of fellowship to all Protestants who confessed that Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God. They acknowledged them all as members of the same body of Christ, and therefore assemble round one table of the Lord, and sought in this way the unity of the spirit, the bond of peace. They considered that *the office of teacher hath ceased* in the church, and that now Christians "needed not that any man should teach them," because the New Testament now exists, &c. Their baptism simply involved the admission of the person, by the ceremony of *immersion*, into the Church universal, not into their particular section of it. They had no membership strictly speaking, unless the possession of the fruits of the Spirit, on which they laid great stress, and the attendance of their meetings, could be so called, although they had the same principle of organization as the other Mennonites, and a simple method of collecting and distributing alms. They had no communion

with wicked persons. They had a yearly gathering, at which they kept a free table for those persons not able to afford it, to which the various meetings sent delegates. Precisely as they admitted an attender of their meetings to preach or pray, they admitted his singing of a hymn. They also sang together as a congregation, and gave special attention to the selection of the most beautiful hymns for use in their meetings. In 1743 they still had eighteen places of worship. Their largest meeting was at Amsterdam, and they originally held it in the Meeting House of the United Waterlander and Flemish Mennonites. The facility with which their ideas were propagated, and their influence upon religious opinion in England, was doubtless greatly assisted by the fact of their friendly relations with the Waterlander Mennonite church in Amsterdam. A large number of their attenders were members of other Mennonite Churches, and in some instances a minister of a Mennonite church was at the same time a preacher among the Collegianten ; and the Waterlander used their meetings as a means of exercising the gifts of their younger ministers. In their worship there was a time of silence between the varions discourses preached, and they prayed standing. They were called by their neighbours in Reinsburg (the place where they originated) "the sect of the prophets." In 1743 they were called "Quakers" by the common people.* Their great characteristic was the repudiation of the office of teacher in the church, and the stress they laid upon the description of preaching which they termed prophesying, which they held should be open to all spiritually minded christians. As long as other branches of the Mennonites maintained their

* "Rues Aufrichtige Nachrichten der Collegianten oder Reinsburger," p. 244, Jena, 1743.

extreme rigidity and intolerance of differences of opinion among themselves, the Collegianten maintained their position, but on the introduction of more liberal and enlightened christian views among them, they lost their *raison d'être*. In 1787 their last general assembly at Rynsburg was held, and in 1791 their meetings at Amsterdam and Rotterdam ceased, and the last became extinct at Sardam in 1810. Thus passed away this interesting attempt to form a Church without a distinct membership, and without church officers having positive duties as pastors. Their works, Orphan House and Hospital, still remain to attest their christian love. Many tracts were published in Holland on the subject, and the views of the Collegianten occupied a considerable amount of attention among the Mennonites.*

* The whole of this chapter has been carefully corrected by my friend Dr. Scheffer, the Principal of the Mennonite College in Amsterdam.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COURSE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1640 (*continued*). THE RETURN OF HELWYS TO ENGLAND. HE FOUNDS THE FIRST GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCH. HE IS FOLLOWED BY HENRY JACOB. HE FOUNDS THE FIRST INDEPENDENT CHURCH ON THE PRINCIPLES OF JOHN ROBINSON. THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF THE ENGLISH SEPARATIST CHURCHES AT AMSTERDAM AND LEYDEN.

WE now return to our narrative, and proceed to give an account of the views of Ainsworth, Johnson, Robinson, and Smyth. Thomas Helwys, as we have before shown, agreed substantially with Smyth in his religious opinions. The slight difference between them was followed* by Helwys returning to England in 1611, or the early part of 1612, and founding a Church in London.† A portion of Smyth's Church returned with him. Helwys is supposed to have published "A Declaration of Faith, of English People remaining in Amsterdam, in Holland," printed in 1611 in English, since he refers to it in a subsequent work.‡

* See "Reply to Helwys, of Flight in Persecution," by John Robinson, 1614. Ashton's Reprint, vol. iii. p. 159.

† Ibid, p. 160.

‡ See Dr. Underhill's preface to the reprint, "Persecution for Religion," &c.

It is stated by some writers, that Helwys was Pastor of Smyth's Church at Amsterdam after his death.* This is inconsistent with the facts we give.† His work, dated 1611, and dedicated to Hans de Ries ‡ and the various Mennonite churches, shows that there was at that moment a division of feeling between them, and that Smyth and the majority of his Church were one in sentiment with Hans de Ries, and this tract appears to be the act of a person about to leave them. Helwys, although he had misunderstood Smyth, was actuated by the highest motives, and feeling that "the salvation of thousands of ignorant souls in our own country," who, from lack of instruction were perishing, might depend upon his braving persecution, left for England. Smyth was greatly pained at the "Separation," and the harsh terms in which he was condemned by his former friends in this work. He was not hasty in replying, but before his death (in August, 1612), in his last work, with touching christian gentleness

* Crosby states, that "a little after Smyth's death, Helwys and his people published a confession of their faith," at the end of which there was an appendix giving some account of Mr. Smyth's last sickness and death, which he says he was unable to meet with. This nearly corresponds with the tract to which we have referred, and shall refer again (without title, but) called "Smyth's Confession and Life," lately found in York Minster Library. The work speaks of Smyth writing this tract "not long before his death;" this gives its correct date 1612 or 1613. This is signed "T. P.," probably Thomas Piggott [see signatures at end of Short Confession, "Evans' Baptists," vol. i., p. 252], and the scope of the work is to vindicate John Smyth's memory, and to explain the difference between him and Helwys, and renders it probable that it was published by another offset from Smyth's Church, after his death, and not by Helwys. It is this tract which is replied to by Robinson in 1614, in "A Survey of the Confession of Faith," published in certain conclusions by the remainders of Mr. Smyth's company after his death. We print this tract as an appendix to this chapter.

† Helwys defends himself in "A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity," 1612, "against the reproaches cast upon them *after their return from exile*." Dr. Underhill's preface, Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p. 88.

‡ An advertisement to "The New Fryelers (Freewillers) in the Low Countries," 1611.

and humility, after withdrawing all harsh expressions to his opponents by name in his various works, he tells Helwys that difference "in judgment for matters of circumstance (as are all things of the outward church) shall not cause me to refuse the brotherhood of any penitent and faithful christian whatsoever." Helwys, he says, had condemned him merely for a slight difference of opinion. "What shall I say for my apology? Shall I say that my heart yet appertaineth to the Lord, that I daily seek mercy and ask forgiveness, that I labour to reform myself wherein I see my error, that I continually search after the truth, and endeavour myself to keep a good conscience in all things." John Smyth died in August, 1612, and was buried in the New Church at Amsterdam.* The whole tenor of this work, and the short account of his life and death, tend to show that Helwys returned to England *previous*ly to Smyth's death. Morton was associated with Helwys, and about 1615 was a teacher in a Separatist church in Newgate.† In 1626 we find that Morton's Church numbered 150 members, and that prior to 1624, eighteen persons had seceded under a Pastor of the name of Elias Tookey, and formed a new church.‡ At this period, in communion with Morton's Church, there were five General, or Arminian Baptist Churches in intimate communication with the Mennonite Church of Hans de Ries

* Smyth's burial is registered in the register of the New Church of Amsterdam, on the 1st of September, 1612, where he was buried, and at the time of his decease he lodged in the hinder part of the "great bakehouse," then belonging to John Munter where religious meetings were held by the English who joined the Mennonites. I am indebted for this to Dr. Scheffer, who has, by searching these registers, established a date of great importance in the history of the English Separatist Churches in Holland. The date of the death of Smyth has been variously stated, and no authority has hitherto been given for the date.

† "Evans' Baptists," vol. ii., p. 33, quotation from "Truth's Victory," London, 1545, p. 19. ‡ "Evans' History," vol. ii., pp. 25, 40, & 26.

at Amsterdam, viz., London, Lincoln, Sarum, Coventry, and Tiverton. In 1612, Helwys published "A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity," in which he condemned flight in persecution. This was replied to by Robinson, in 1614, in his work on "Religious Communion, private and public, with the silencing of the clamour raised by Mr. Thomas Helwisse against our retaining the baptism received in England, and administering of baptism unto infants; as also a Survey of the Confession of Faith, published in certain conclusions by the *remainders* of Mr. Smyth's company *after his death.*"* This led to the famous work by Morton (?) and his associates, published in 1615, "Persecution for Religion Judged and Condemned."† On the side of Robinson, the permission by our Saviour was pleaded, to fly from persecution, and he contends for our liberty either to fly or to abide as seems best for the cause of God's truth. On the side of Helwys and Morton, it was contended that it had "been the overthrow of religion" in England, "the best, able, and greater part being gone, and leaving behind them some few" who had been brought into greater affliction and contempt. Many had "fallen back," and the enemies of christian truth had exulted. The saints, they said, "overcame" (not by flying away), but "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," and they "loved not their lives unto the death."

This treatise of the eminent members of the Church founded by Helwys, accurately discriminates between the

* This is treated by Robinson as expressing equally the sentiments of Helwys and his Church. It seems probable that there were three "remainders" of "Smyth's company," Helwys' Church in London, the Church in Amsterdam which united with the Mennonites, and another English offset, who published "Smyth's Life," &c., in English.

† See Dr. Underhill's preface to the "Hansard Knollys' Society's Reprint," p. 89.

office of the magistrate in civil matters, and the claim to interfere in Christ's Church. "Earthly authority belongeth to earthly kings, but spiritual authority belongeth to that one spiritual King who is King of kings."* Robinson on the other hand, contended that magistrates have "no power against the laws, doctrine, and religion of Christ," but they could use the civil sword "against the *contrary*," and also that the godly magistrate might "use his lawful power lawfully for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom and laws."† We have therefore a distinct line drawn between the clear and full principles of religious liberty advocated by Helwys, and the associated churches of the General, Arminian, or Mennonite Baptists, and the modified principles of Robinson and the churches of the "Moderate Independents."‡

As we shall hereafter show, the Plymouth Church, commonly called the Church of the Pilgrim Fathers, and the Assembly Independents, strictly followed the principles of Robinson. These Churches were advocates of a limited toleration of "tolerable" opinions, and their principles appear to have strictly governed their actions, and led them at last to the point of accepting State aid, and of using the sword of the magistrate to repress the Churches opposed to them in opinion. The tendency to fusion with the Presbyterians, which this section of the Independent Churches showed, is thus readily explained.

* See "Hansard Knollys' Society's Reprint," p. 134.

† "Religious Communion," Ashton's reprint, p. 277.

‡ Peter John Zwisek of West Frisia, a Mennonite, published in the year 1609, "The Liberty of Religion." The object of this work was to show that many and differing sects brought no injury to states, and that heretics so called should not be converted by the sword or the civil power, but by the Word of God. Christ's kingdom, he says, is not of this world, and therefore the Gospel should not be preached by force of arms

In 1614, Leonard Busher, who is believed to have been a member of Helwys' and Morton's church, presented to King James and the Parliament, his petition for liberty of conscience, which was published in 1614, under the title of "Religion's Place, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience;" and in 1620 was published "A Most Humble Supplication of many of the King's Loyal Subjects . . . who are persecuted only for differing in religion." In these treatises we have the great principles of religious liberty so clearly laid down, and supported by arguments so able and conclusive, as to leave little unsaid upon the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Christ. In 1609, Henry Jacob, M.A., to whom we have before alluded, was at Leyden in close conference with Robinson. He published in that year "A Humble Supplication for Toleration, and Liberty to enjoy and observe the Ordinances of Jesus Christ, in the Administration of His Churches, in lieu of Human Constitutions." Jacob, in his work, "did not argue for religious liberty in the entire breadth of it."^{*} He appears to have held nearly all the principles of Church government advocated by Robinson, but acknowledged in this work "no other power and authority for the overseeing, ruling, and censuring of particular Churches, in case of their misgovernment, than that which is *originally invested in your royal person*," or to lay persons deputed by the King. In 1616, Jacob returned to Southwark, influenced, it is thought, by the arguments of Helwys. He collected the scattered members of the ancient Separatist Church there, and was appointed their Pastor. This may be considered the first Independent Church established in England, after the exile of the three ancient churches. Jacob emigrated

* "Hanbury," in note on p. 225, vol. i.

to America in 1624. His successor was John Lothrop. In 1632, Lothrop and forty-two of his Church were discovered by Laud, seized, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In 1634, with thirty-two of his congregation, he also emigrated, and settled at Scituate, Plymouth county. Their next Pastor was the celebrated John Canne, who had been Pastor of Johnson's Church at Amsterdam,* and was subsequently Pastor of the Baptist Church at Broadmead, Bristol. The next Pastor was Samuel How, celebrated as the "learned cobbler," who also became a Baptist. This enables us to trace the ancient Separatist Church in London to the Commonwealth times, when we shall again meet with them.

We now propose to give a short account of the principles of Church government elaborated by the exiled Churches. The first we shall deal with was the Ancient Church of Amsterdam, which divided, as we have seen, into four branches. First, that under Henry Ainsworth's guidance; secondly, that of John Robinson of Leyden; thirdly, Francis Johnson's Church; fourthly, that of John Smyth. The Ancient Church of Amsterdam existed for about one hundred years. All the exiled Churches agreed that each congregation was independent of all others in respect of self-government, but not in respect of mutual counsel and help. They had power "to elect and ordain their own ministry according to the rules in God's Word prescribed." No members were to be received but "such as do make profession of their faith, desiring to be received as members, and promising to walk in the obedience of Christ." In the three first mentioned Churches no infants were to be

* In 1634 he calls himself "Pastor of the Ancient Church at Amsterdam;" see his "Necessity of Separation," &c.

baptised and received, but such as were “the seed of the faithful by one of the parents, or under their education and government.” These infants were favoured as having a covenant relation to God through their elect parents, and were presumably elect also. No members were to be received from another congregation without “a certificate of their former estate and present purpose.” . . . “Such as see not the truth, may, notwithstanding, hear the public doctrine and prayers of the Church.” The Church was “a community of the saints called and separated from the world.” All the adult members communicated in the Lord’s Supper.* Christ was “their prophet, priest, and king.” They had no head to the Church but Him. The officers of the Church were of five kinds—pastors, teachers, rulers, deacons, widows or deaconesses. The Church had the power of excommunicating any of its members. Every member of each christian congregation, “how excellent, great, or learned whatsoever, ought to be subject to the censure and judgment of Christ.” All the Churches held that those “to whom God had given gifts to interpret the Scriptures, tried in the exercise of prophecy, may, and ought, by the appointment of the congregation, to prophesy, and so to teach publicly the Word of God for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church, until such time as the people be meet for, and God manifest, men with able gifts and fitness to such office or offices Christ hath appointed to the public ministry of his Church.”† The fullest liberty of prophesying or preaching

* The Independent Churches in Holland partook of the Lord’s Supper every Sunday evening, admitting “Baptists and Brownists” to communion. Sometimes they sat at table, sometimes it was brought to the communicant sitting.—J. Lydius, “Historie der Beroerten van England,” pp. 81, 82, 1649.

† Article XXXIV. of the Confession of 1598.

was conceded in all these churches,* to members not in office, and there was a period set apart after the pastor and teacher had both exercised their ministry. In the middle of the week also, there was a meeting for this purpose, when even persons not belonging to the Church might prophesy or preach.† We have already described the difference between Ainsworth and Johnson. In Johnson's Church the people elected the officers, and the officers transacted the business of the church, the people having no voice. Ainsworth and Robinson held that the elders, or whole staff of officers, “*aye* a part of the church, and are not ‘lords over God’s heritage;’” and in fact were not essential to the Church, because it could exist without elders, whether pastors, teachers, &c.‡ Johnson held that there should be *one* pastor only in the church, and ruling and teaching elders as distinct officers. In Robinson’s Church it was absolutely essential that a “governing elder” should be “apt to teach.”§ This formed a vital distinction between the Presbyterianism and Independency of the day, which led to important practical results. John Smyth, on the other hand, held in opposition to Presbyterianism, that “where the popish prelacy was suppressed, and the triformed presbytery of pastors, teachers, and lay elders substituted, one antichrist was put down and another substituted in its place.” The Independent Churches held that five kinds of

* “A Christian Plea,” p. 266, by F. Johnson, 1617. Johnson died in 1618—see “Waddington’s Congregational History,” p. 192, quotation from State papers, Holland, Slade’s Letter.

† “The Flyers permit infidelious Marchantes to come on the Thursday unto their exercise of prophesying.”—Henoch Clapham’s Error on the Right Hand,” &c., London, 1608. 4th Dialogue.

‡ “Life of Ainsworth.” ×

§ “We choose none for governing elders but those that be apt to teach.” “Ashton’s Reprint of Robinson’s Works,” Vol. iii., p. 488.

officers were mentioned in Scripture, and that their offices in Christ's Church were distinct and definite. Smyth's view is worthy of special notice. He held that there was only *one* order of elders mentioned in Scripture, for *one* person might "teach," "exhort," "rule." "Lay elders" were absolutely "Antichristian," there being no mention in the New Testament of any such officers, as purely ruling elders. Their "rule" was the influence derived from the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The difference between Robinson and Smyth was this; that what the Independent Churches took to be distinct *offices* in the Church of Christ, Smyth took to be different *functions* of the same kind of officers, which avoided many difficulties in the interpretation of the New Testament. Robinson held that the gift of prophesying or preaching did not come by means of *the office*, but was "a calling from the Lord." He denied all prophecy which was "extraordinary by immediate revelation," holding that this had ceased, and that it was now "mediate" and was by the *ordinary* revelation of the Spirit. All the members of the Church who "have a gift, must prophesy according to their proportion," &c. Robinson considered the exercise of prophecy by such members most important for its well being. He wrote a treatise in 1618, called "The People's Plea for the exercise of Prophecy against Mr. John Yates, his Monopoly." Yates was a preacher in Norwich, and he wrote to prove "ordinary prophecy *out of office* unlawful." Robinson, in answer to Yates, contends that all "spiritual men," though "out of office," who have "a gift, must prophesy according to their proportion," that so far (as Yates thinks it) from being "a disgrace" to the officers of the Church for another Church member to prophesy *after* them, such an idea was only "the effect of evil customs

infecting the minds of godly men." It was only since those who ought to be "the servants of the Church" have "become her masters," that "one alone in the Church must be heard all his life long, others better able than he sitting at his feet continually," and that it should be thought "a disgrace" for one to prophesy after him. He states that in the Church at Leyden, of which he was pastor, "after the exercise of the public ministry is ended, (that is, the office of teacher) the rulers in the Church do publicly exhort and require that such of their own, or other churches, as have a gift to speak to the edification of the hearers, should use the same "according to the precedent in Acts xiii. 14. Paul and Barnabas were exhorted by the rulers of the synagogue, if they had "any word of exhortation to the people," they should "say on." He prays that the "Lord may give unto his people courage to stand for this liberty," and to "us who enjoy it, grace to use it to his glory in our mutual edification." Not only was the practice in use, Robinson tells us, in "each" of the exiled Independent Churches, but it was in use in the congregations of the Belgic Churches, "and the Synod at Embden, 1571, decreed that it was to be observed in all churches."* He advocates the practice as conduced to "familiarity and goodwill" between the order of ministers and people. It fitted men for the ministry. It tended to the conversion of

* See also the "Acta of the Synod of Wesel," 3rd November, 1568, chap. ii. "We call those *prophets*, who in the meetings of the Church explain a text as Paul has ordained, and herein we distinguish them from the ministers, that to them is enjoined the explanation of the Holy Scriptures, and the teaching, whilst the office of ministers of God is more extended." "We judge that this order of prophets ought to be maintained in every thriving church."—Par. 16 and 17. "In this college of prophets shall be admitted, not only the Elders, but also the Ministers and Deacons, yea, all particular members who desire to receive the gift of prophecy from the Lord, and to employ it for the benefit of the Church."—Par. 191.

others. There is therefore great reason to believe, that this was in principle and practice maintained at this time in all Independent churches, both Pædo-baptist and Baptist. The only church among the English Separatists in Holland which did not allow this practice, was Mr. Simpson's church ; Mr. Bridge's church separating from Mr. Simpson on this question of the liberty of prophecy.* It is also most important to notice, that through Robinson and Smyth, this principle of lay-preaching found not only admission in theory, but actual practice, in the first Congregational and Baptist Churches subsequently established in England.† The controversial tracts which the practices of the Pædo-baptist and Baptist sections of the English Churches, exiled in Holland, poured forth in such profusion, were extensively read in England, and doubtless formed the religious literature of the English churches. They were written with profound ability, and their authors were men of sound learning. Ainsworth united with Smyth

* Baillie's "Dissuasive," &c., p. 175.

† R. Baylie, in his "Dissuasive from the Errors of the Times," &c., p. 15, London, 1645, says, "Robinson was the most learned, polished and modest spirit among the Brownists," and that he was the author of Independency, and that those in England "whose humour carried them out of the bosom of their mother-church, have turned either to Smyth's Anabaptism, or to Robinson's Semi-separating Independency." There is a copy of a work by John Robinson, published as a small tract in the British Museum: "A Brief Catechism concerning Church Government," 1642, which embodies all the principles of Independent Churches, and probably exercised a most important influence. He says that "the preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments are not marks of the *true* Church. The fellowship of the Church consists in the gifts of the Spirit of Christ, and in the offices of the ministry given to the Church, and in the works done by those gifts and offices . . . apostles, prophets, and evangelists have ceased. The pastor is given the gift of wisdom for exhortation; the teacher receives the gift of knowledge for doctrine." Next come the elders, the deacons, and the widows or deaconesses, who are "to attend the sick and impotent with compassion and cheerfulness;" in fact, Protestant "nursing sisters" attached to every Independent church. This institution might be revived.

in some of his views respecting the treatment the Scriptures received at the hands of the Puritans. The following passage expresses a view of the Scriptures, which may be found in substance set forth in Fox's Life and other works,* and indeed embodied one of the peculiarities of his teaching as opposed to that of the Presbyterians of his day. It occurs in "A reply to a pretended 'Christian Plea' by Francis Johnson," by Henry Ainsworth, 1618, printed in the year 1620. Ainsworth quotes from Johnson — "The Word of God is not the bare letter, or outward syllables, but the intendment and meaning of the Holy Ghost by whom it was given, which should carefully be observed by the due consideration of the Scriptures with the circumstances thereof;" Ainsworth adds, "These words of his are true, and the more it is to be lamented *he* should 'press the letter' against me.† Ainsworth held that it was unlawful to hold the worship of God in "Idol" temples, or buildings in which mass had formerly been said. Barrow held the same view.‡ The early Congregationalists and Baptists, held that Independent Churches ought to be small in number, because "in huge and vast flocks the governors cannot take knowledge of the manners of the people;§ . . . what damage cometh unto true piety" by this practice, "miserable experience" showed. "There is, too," he says, "the most full and perfect communion of the Body" in such Churches. Robinson held, that as marriage was common to Gentiles as well as Christians, the pastor's office had nothing to do with marriage; that the pastor ought not, as in the reformed Churches, to celebrate marriage.||

* See G. Fox's Journal, 1652, the Lancashire Sessions. Judge Fell and Colonel West take the same view as Fox.

† Hanbury, p. 321. ‡ Ibid, pp. 348, 349. § Ibid, p. 373. || Ibid, p. 381. "A Just and Necessary Apology," p. 41, by John Robinson, 1625. This is in the Bodleian.

In the book of Smyth * called the “Differences of the Church of the Separation,” he lays down six positions which throw a striking light upon the principles and practices of the General Baptists, and we venture to think upon the origin of a leading idea of Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends. “First—We hold that the New Testament, properly so called, is *spiritual*, proceeding originally from the heart, and that reading out of a book (though a lawful ecclesiastical action) is no part of spiritual worship, but rather the invention of the man of sin, it being substituted for a part of spiritual worship. Second—We hold that, seeing prophesying is a part of spiritual worship, therefore in the time of prophesying it is unlawful to have the book, as a help, before the eye. Third—We hold, that seeing singing a psalm is a part of spiritual worship, it is unlawful to have the book before the eye in time of singing a psalm. Fourth—We hold that the presbytery of the Church is uniform, and that tri-formed presbytery, consisting of three kinds of elders or pastors, and teachers, is none of God’s ordinance, but man’s device. Fifth—We hold, that all the

* Copy in the Bodleian : “The Differences of the Church of the Separation : containing a description of the Leitourgie and Ministrie of the visible church, annexed as a correction and supplement to a little treatise lately published, bearing title, ‘Principles and Inferences respecting the Visible Church.’” First, for the satisfaction of every true lover of the truth, especially the brethren of the separation that are doubtful. Secondly, as also for the removing of an unjust calomnie cast upon the brethren of the separation of the second English Church of Amsterdam. Finally for the clearing of the truth, and the discovering of the mystery of iniquity yet in the worship and offices of the Church, divided into two parts ; first concerning the Litourgie of the Church, second, concerning the Ministrie of the Church, which hath two sections, one of the eldership, another of the deacons’ office whereto appertaineth the treasury ; by John Smyth, 1608. “Search the Scriptures,” John v. 39 ; “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good,” 1 Thes. v. 21 ; “Beloved, believe not every spirit,” John i. 41, &c.—pp. 1 and 2. This was replied to by Ainsworth in his “Defence of the Holy Scriptures, worship, and ministry, used by the Church separated from antichrist,” 4to, 1609.

elders of the Church are pastors, and that “lay elders” (so called) are antichristian. Sixth—We hold, that in contributing to the church-treasury there ought to be both a separation from them that are without, and a sanctification of the whole action by prayer and thanksgiving.”

We have already seen the practice of the Mennonite Churches with respect to silent prayer or worship in the congregation. We may infer that silence prevailed in Smyth’s church both prior to, and during the time of prophesying, because he remarks (p. 3.) that “the Spirit is “ quenched by *silence* when fit matter is revealed to one that “ sitteth by, and he withholdeth it in time of prophesying. “ The Spirit is quenched by set forms of worship ‘ because ’ “ the Spirit is then not at liberty to utter itself, but is “ bounded *in*. The New Testament Churches used no books “ in time of spiritual worship, but prayed, prophesied, and sung out of their hearts”—(p. 34). In the “Last book of John Smyth” (York Minster Library), he says, “ Although “ it be lawful to pray, preach, and sing out of a book for “ all penitent persons, yet a man regenerate is above all “ books and scriptures whatsoever, seeing he hath the “ Spirit of God within him, which teacheth him the true “ meaning of the Scriptures, without which Spirit the “ Scriptures are but a dead letter which is perverted and “ misconstrued, as we see this day, to contrary ends and “ senses, and that to bind a regenerate man to a book in “ prayer, preaching, or singing, is to set the Holy Ghost to “ school in the one as well as the other.”

Ainsworth tells us, in a reply to Smyth,* that the

* “A Defence of the Holy Scripture, worship, and ministry used in the christian Churches separated from antichrist, against the challenges, cavils, and contradictions of Mr. Smyth, in his book entitled, ‘The Differences of the Churches of the Separation,’ Amsterdam, 1609.

commencement of the separation between the “Ancient Church” and Smyth, was that Smyth, impressed with the importance of “spiritual worship,” “charged us with sin for using our English bibles in the worship of God, and he thought that the teachers should bring the originals, the Hebrew and Greek, and out of them translate *by voice*. A written translation,” he alleged, was as much a “human writing, as a homily or prayer written or read.” Smyth admitted “singing by the Spirit,” or portions of scripture to be sung, but “his disciples, used neither of these in their assemblies.” Ainsworth approved all that had Bibles bringing them to the church and searching. Not only had Christ given gifts to men to open the Scriptures, but they were sufficient to make “wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ,” 2 Tim. iii. 15. Smyth asserted that it “never could be proved by Scripture that there was but *one pastor in a church.*” * We shall enter more fully into Smyth’s doctrinal opinions. He was a learned man, and Bishop Hall considers him to have ranked higher than Robinson. Baillie speaks of him as “a man of right eminent parts.” All his opponents speak of him in similar terms,† but his Arminian and Baptist opinions were regarded by every branch of the Separatists as calculated to bring the Separation into still greater contempt. From this period they cannot speak of him with calmness. His happy and triumphant assurance of salvation, on his death-bed, is characterized as “sad and woeful,” ‡ and he is

* “Differences,” &c., J. Smyth, 1608, p. 26.

† e.g. “Master Smyth is a scholar of no small reading, and well seen and experienced in arts.” “A Description of the Church of Christ, &c., with some oppositions against anabaptistical erroneous opinions, very hurtful and dangerous to weak christians, maintained by Master John Smyth,” &c., London, 1610.

‡ Mr. Cotton’s Letter, lately printed, examined by Roger Williams, p. 14, London, 1644, “it is set as a *seal* to his gross and damnable *Arminianism.*”

treated as a brother who is lost ; and even to the present day he is blamed for being more anxious than his brethren to obtain the whole truth, and for continuing the process by which the other Separatists had arrived at their religious opinions. "I have," says Smyth, "in all my writings hitherto, received instruction of others, and professed my readiness to be taught by others, and therefore have I so oftentimes been accused of inconstancy. Well, let them think of me as they please. I profess I have changed, and shall be ready still to change *for the better*, and if it be *their* glory to be peremptory and immutable in their articles of religion, they may enjoy that glory without my envy, though not without the grief of my heart for them."

There are none of the eminent members of the ancient Separatist Church with whose opinions we are more fully acquainted than those of Smyth, and there are none who have expressed them with more precision. We do not profess to give a systematic summary of his creed, but merely such portions of it as will account for the strange outburst of new religious opinions, from 1641 to 1645, in England, which is described in Edward's "Gangrœna," and this work furnishes a strong proof of the activity of Smyth's disciples. We place the doctrinal portions selected in a foot-note, and the practical portions in the text.* The 69th

DOCTRINAL EXTRACTS FROM SMYTH'S LONG CONFESSION.

N.B.—This is given in the reprint of Smyth's Life and Confession, placed as an appendix to this chapter. Those portions are here selected which have an immediate bearing on our subject.

* 59—"That God the Father, of his own good will, doth beget us by the word of truth (James i. 18), which is an *immortal seed* (1 Peter. i. 23), not the doctrine of repentance and faith which may be lost (Luke viii. 13). And that God the Father in our regeneration, neither needeth nor useth the help of any creature, but that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, *immediately* worketh that work in the soul when the free will of men can do nothing" (John ii. 13). 60—"That such as have not attained the new creation have need of the Scriptures, creatures, and ordinances of the Church to instruct them, to comfort them, to stir them up the better to perform the

proposition of the Long Confession, completely vindicates the leaders of this most important branch of the dissenting churches, from narrow or uncharitable views. It is this—“That all penitent, faithful christians are brethren in the communion of the outward Church, wheresoever they live, by what name soever they are known, which in truth and zeal follow repentance and faith, though compassed with never so many ignorances and infirmities; and we salute them all with an holy kiss, being heartily grieved that we which follow one faith and one Spirit, and one God,

DOCTRINAL EXTRACTS FROM SMYTH'S "LONG CONFESSTION," *continued.*

condition of repentance to the remission of sins" (2 Pet. i. 19, 1 Cor. xi. 26, Eph. iv. 12, 23). 61—"That the new creature which is begotten of God needeth not the outward Scriptures, creatures, or ordinances of the Church to support them (2 Cor. xiii. 10, 12; 1 John ii. 27; 1 Cor. i. 15, 16; Rom. xxi. 23), seeing that he hath three witnesses in himself, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which are better than all Scriptures, or creatures whatsoever." 62—"The outward Church and ordinances are always necessary for all sorts of persons whatsoever" (Matt. iii. 15, and xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. viii. 9). 63—"That the new creature, although he be above the law and Scriptures, yet can he do nothing against the law or Scriptures, but rather all his doings shall serve to the confirming and establishing of the law (Rom. iii. 31), therefore he can neither lie, nor steal," &c. He was charged with teaching in these propositions the doctrine of perfection in this life, but he appears only to have taught (65) that "The visible Church is a mystical figure outwardly of the true spiritual, invisible Church, which consisteth of the spirits of just and perfect men, that is, of the regenerate," and he admitted (67) "that when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants, and all our righteousness as a stained cloth," and "that we can only suppress and loppe off the branches of sins, but the root of sin we cannot pluck up out of our hearts;" Jer. iv. 4, compared with Deut. xxx. 6, 8. The 14th and 18th propositions state that God created Adam with "Freedom of will" and "liberty to choose the good and refuse the evil," or *vice versa*, and that he was not "moved or inclined" to sin "by God or any decree of God," and that "original sin is an idle term" (Ezek. xviii. 20) "because God threateneth death only to Adam (Gen. ii. 17), not to his posterity, and because God created the soul" (Heb. xi. 9, 19). "That if original sin might have passed from Adam to his posterity, Christ's death, which was effectual before Cain and Abel's birth, he being the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, stopped the issue and passage" (Apoc. xiii. 8). 24—He contends that, "as there is in all the creatures a natural inclination to their

one Body, and one Baptism, should be rent into so many sects and schisms, and that only for matters of less moment." With regard to the principle of religious liberty and the entire separation of church and state, Smyth held (Prop. 84) * "That the magistrate is not by virtue of his office to meddle with religion or matters of conscience, to force or compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine, but to leave (the) christian religion free to every man's conscience and to handle only civil transgressions, (Rom. 13) injuries, and wrongs of man against man, in

DOCTRINAL EXTRACTS FROM SMYTH'S "LONG CONFESSION," continued.

young ones to do them good, so there is in the Lord towards man, for every spark of goodness in the creation is infinitely good in God" (Rom. i. 20; Psalm xix. 4; Rom. xx. 18) and that (25) "as no man begetteth his child *to the gallows*, nor no potter maketh a pot to break it, so God doth not create or predestinate any man to destruction" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Gen. i. 27; 1 Cor. xv. 49; Gen. v. 3). 27—"God in his redemption hath not swerved from his mercy which he manifested in his creation" (John i. 3, 16, 2 Cor. v. 19, 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6, Ezek. xxxiii. 11). 32—"That although the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood offered up unto God his Father, upon the cross, be a sacrifice of sweet smelling savour, and though God in him is well pleased, yet it doth not reconcile God *unto us* who did never hate us, nor was our enemy, but reconcileth us *unto God*, and slayeth the enmity and hatred which is in us against God" (2 Cor. v. 19; Ephes. ii. 14-17; Rom. i. 30). 57—"Repentance and faith in the Messiah are the conditions to be performed on our behalf for the obtaining of the promise" (Acts ii. 38; John i. 12). 58—That they "are wrought in the hearts of men by the preaching of the word outwardly in the scriptures and creatures, the grace of God preventing us by the motions and instinct of the Spirit which a man hath power to receive or reject" (Mat. xxiii. 37; Acts vii. 5, vi. 10; Rom. x. 14, 18: that our justification before God consisteth not in the performance of the conditions which God requireth of us, but in the partaking of the promises, the possessing of Christ's remission of sins, and the new creature." "Without repentance, faith, and the new creature, there is *no salvation*," and that "the new creature cometh after repentance." Article 7.—That to understand or conceive of God in the mind is not the saving knowledge of God, but to be like God in his effects and properties, to be made conformable to his divine and heavenly attributes; this is the true saving knowledge of God whereunto we ought to give all diligence."

* "Smyth's Confession," York Minster Library, in 100 propositions.

murder, adultery, theft, &c. for Christ only is the king and lawgiver of the church and conscience.—Jas. iv. 12.” With regard to the constitution of particular or independent churches, he held (64) “That the outward church visible consists of penitent persons, only such as believing in Christ, bring forth fruits worthy (of) amendment of life” (1 Tim. vi. 3, 5; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Acts xix. 4). 70—“That the outward Baptism of water was only to be administered upon such penitent and faithful persons and not upon innocent infants or wicked persons” (Mat. iii. 2, 3, compared with Mat. xxviii. 19, 20, and John iv. 1). 71—“In baptism to the penitent person and believer, is presented and figured the spiritual baptism of Christ—that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire—the baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ.” 54—“That John the Baptist and Christ are two persons, their ministries are two ministries several, and their baptisms are two baptisms distinct, the one from the other” (John i. 20; Acts xiii. 25, xiv. 5; Matt. iii. 11). 56—But that Christ “hath a more excellent office and ministry than John (Mat. iii. 11); that He baptiseth with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” So also in the “outward supper of which only baptised persons partake,” is figured Christ’s “spiritual supper.” It is only to be eaten by those “who are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, in the communion of the same spirit.” No grace is “conferred” or “conveyed” to communicants except in the same way as by preaching. Its use is to “stir up the repentance and faith of the communicant till Christ come, till the day dawn and the day star arise in their hearts.” 77—The church has the power of “separating the impenitent” and this is a figure of “the eternal rejection” of those who persist in sin. 78—None are to be rejected for “ignorance, errors, or infirmities,” so long

as they "retain repentance and faith in Christ," but they are to be "instructed with meekness." 80—If they fall, great efforts are to be used for their reclamation: their separation from the society is only "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." 76—Christ has set in his outward church "two sorts of ministers: 1st pastors, teachers, or elders. 2nd those who are called deacons, men and women." 89—"That if the Lord shall give a man a special calling, as Simon and Andrew, James and John, then they must leave all, father, ship, nets, wife, children, yea, and life also, to follow Christ." 86—The members of the outward church "are to judge all their causes of difference among themselves, and they are not to go to law before the magistrates, 1 Cor. vi. 1, 7. All differences are to be ended by yea and nay without an oath." (87) They are not to marry "the profane and wicked godless people of the world," but only "in the Lord." (88) "Christian parents are bound to bring up their children in instruction and in information of the Lord." 90—"In the necessities of the Church and poor brethren, all things are to be in common, and that one Church is to administer to another in time of need." 7 and 9. [*Short Confession.*] Christ is "God and man, the Son of the living God." He came "into the world to save sinners," to reconcile the sinful world to God the Father. He is the "only mediator, king, priest, and prophet, lawgiver and teacher." 10. [S.C.]—"In Him is fulfilled and by Him taken away, an intolerable burden of the law of Moses, even all the shadows and figures; as namely the priesthood, temple, altar, sacrifice," &c. 18. [S.C.]—"They that are the redeemed of the Lord, do change their fleshly weapons, namely, their swords into shares, and their spears into sythes, do lift up no sword, neither hath nor consent to battle." 35. [S.C.]—"Yea

rather they are called of Him (whom they are commanded to obey by a voice heard from heaven) to the following of his unarmed and unweaponed life and of his cross-bearing footsteps." 36—"It is not permitted that the faithful of the New Testament should swear at all."

In Robert Baylie's "Dissuasive from the Errors of the Times, wherein the tenets of the principal sects, especially of the Independents, are drawn together in one mass, for the most part in the words of their authors," &c. (London, 1645), we have additional and valuable information. This work clearly shows the principles and practices of the Separatist Churches in Holland to be those of the Independent Churches of his time. Baylie was the Commissioner of the Kirk of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly, and he gives details respecting their practices (p. 28.) "Saint Andrew, Monday, Tuesday, January, &c. &c., are words to them prophane and unlawful." "There must be no limitation of preaching either to time or place." "Pulpits they scorn, they laugh at preaching to an hour-glass" (p. 29). "The singing of psalms in metre, not being formal scripture, but a paraphrase, is unlawful. They permit to sing psalms in prose, but herein Mr. Smyth is wiser than his fellows. All singing out of a book is idolatry, but he admits of singing such psalms as the spirit declares to any person *immediately*, without book;" preaching the word to them is no particular act, but is common not only to all the officers, but to every gifted brother of the flock. The Lord's Supper they celebrated every Lord's-day. They count it lawful to join with the Lord's table, love-feasts. When the exercise of reading, expounding, singing of psalms, praying and preaching by the pastor is ended, they will have one, two, three, or four, to prophesy in order, and all to have free liberty of continuing as long as they may think meet.

After this is done they have yet another exercise, wherein by way of conference, questioning and disputation, every one of the congregation may propound publicly and press their scruples, doubts, and objections against anything they may have heard; and as if all these exercises were not enough to tire out a spirit of iron, the most of them being repeated in the afternoon, for a conclusion of all they bring in the laborious and long work of their discipline, for which the whole flock must stay till they have heard debated and discussed every cause that concerns either the officers or any of the people, either in doctrine or manners."

This closely agrees with the account given by two of the members of Smyth's Church, of their worship. It seems probable, however (see p. 107) that between the rising of the persons prophesying, the practice of silent prayer observed by the Mennonites prevailed. "We begin by a prayer, after read one or two chapters of the Bible, give the sense thereof and confer on the same. That done, we lay aside our books,—and, after a solemn prayer made by the first speaker, he propoundeth some text out of the scripture and prophesieth out of the same by the space of one hour, or three quarters of an hour. After him standeth up a *second* speaker, and prophesieth out of the *same text*. After him the *third*, the fourth, the fifth, or as many as the time will give leave. Then the first speaker concludeth with prayer, with an exhortation to contribution to the poor. This morning exercise begins at eight of the clock and continueth till twelve of the clock. The like courses and exercises are observed in the afternoon, from two of the clock unto five or six of the clock. Last of all the execution of the government of the church is handled." *

* Letter from Hugh Bromhead to William Hamerton, of London. Harleian MS. 360 fol.

This shows the earnestness and pious delight of these excellent men, in being able at last to worship God in peace and safety. Eight hours of worship and disciplinary business, seems however to justify Baillie's criticism, and to have been an unwise disregard of the fact that we have bodies as well as souls, which can be paralleled in modern times.

It will be a point of great interest to the Society of Friends, to note, that while in these meetings for discipline all the members "had free liberty of voting decisively, and of debate," yet "nothing must go by *number or plurality of voices*, and there must be no moderator, or prolocutor, for the order of their action." We believe the Society of Friends is the only Church, now existing, who have maintained this rule up to the present day, and this shows us again the close connection between their practices and those of the Amsterdam Churches. Baylie states (p. 61) that "the new English Independent" (*i.e.* in 1645) held "the abominable heresy" of "avowing openly the personal inhabitation of the Spirit in all the godly, and his immediate revelation without the word, and these as infallible as scripture itself." * Baylie describes the London Independents of his time as following closely these Separatist Churches of Holland in their practices, and we think that the source of the leading ideas which Fox commenced propagating in 1648, and upon which he constituted the churches he founded, can now be readily seen. The connection between the views of Smyth on war and

* This is the current misrepresentation of the doctrine in question by the Presbyterian party of that age, and is couched in the same words in which they attacked Fox's teaching. In the Swarthmore papers there are frequent complaints of misrepresentation.

those of George Fox, may be traced in the fact, that in 1646 there were some of the English General Baptists who held "that it is unlawful to take up arms for laws and civil liberties."^{*} In 1626 we find them discussing this very question with a Mennonite Church in Holland and taking advice.[†] It is obvious that their original principles on the unlawfulness of war had begun to be questioned. Owing to the extensive trade carried on between London and Holland, it was a common practice for those engaged in it to attend the exiled English churches in the large cities. This facilitated the spread of the tracts of Separatists in England. Later on, Baxter tells us that "five or six ministers who came from Holland and the Brownist relicts, did drive on others according to their dividing principles and sowed the seeds which afterwards spread over all the land."[‡] He tells us that the leaders of the Separatists in the army, "the men that bore the bell, that did all the hurt amongst them," were "men who had been in London, hatcht up among the old Separatists, and made it all their matter of study and religion to rail against ministers and parish churches and Presbyterians."[§]

* "A relation of several heresies," &c., p. 11, 1646. Errors in the Commonwealth of the Anabaptists ("who teach freewill in spiritual things").

† "Evans' Early Baptists," vol. ii. pp. 29 and 39.

‡ "Baxter's Life," from his manuscript, by Sylvester, p. 56.

§ "Baxter's Life," p. 53.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI.

Reprint of Tract lately found in York Minster Library (without title), and believed to be unique, containing "The last book of John Smith (Smyth), called the Retraction of his Errors, and the Confirmation of the Truth;" also "The Life and Death of John Smith (Smyth)," by Thomas Piggott; also John Smyth's "Confession of Faith" in One Hundred Propositions, which was replied to by John Robinson, of Leyden, in his "Survey of the Confessions of Faith," published in certain conclusions by the remainders of Mr. Smyth's Company after his death (published 1614). There is no date, but as Smyth died, August, 1612, it may be inferred with certainty to have been printed between 1613 and 1614. The whole of this reprint has been carefully corrected by S. Walter Stott, Minor Canon and Assistant Librarian of York Minster Library. The importance of this work to the student of the history of the English Baptists is very great.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

CONSIDERING that all means and helps are necessary for men, to provoke them to the practice of religion, and obedience of the truth, especially in this latter age of the world, when our Saviour Christ witnesseth, that because of the abounding of iniquity, the love of many shall wax cold, which appeareth too manifest in these days. Therefore we have thought good to manifest unto thee (good reader) the manner of the life of (John Smith), remaining for a time at Amsterdam in Holland, and how he carried himself in his sickness, even unto his death. Whereunto we have annexed a small confession of faith: with a little treatise which he writ not long before his death, desiring that it should be published unto the world; in the reading whereof, we beseech thee to cast away prejudice, and be not forestalled with the supposed errors held by him, or us, nor with the censure of other, which have thrust themselves too far into the room of God, to judge things before the time; but try all things, and take that which is good: and in trying, put on love, which will teach thee to interpret all things in the best part, and the rather, because that to take things in the evil part is the property of an evil mind. Even as the bee and spider coming both to one flower, the one taketh honey and the other poison, according to their nature, so it is with men: for he that is full despiseth an honeycomb, and the sick stomach abhorreth most pleasant meat, but to the sound and hungry all good things have a good taste; even so it is in spiritual matters: and therefore we direct these things especially unto two sorts of men, the one is the careless professor, who placeth all his religion in knowledge, in speaking, and in outward profession; that such may know that true religion consisteth not in knowledge,

but in practice, not in word but in power: and that such as have the form of godliness, and do deny the power thereof, are to be separated from: the other is the hungry soul, and the upright in heart, which seek the Lord, to let them see and know that there is in the Lord all sufficience, and such a measure of grace to be attained unto, as that they may be made partakers of the Divine nature, and may come to the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ (Eph. iv. 13), and to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. The which, who so well considereth, it will cause them not to be careless and negligent, but careful and diligent, to use all means which may further them in this great work of the Lord. And know also, that the intent of the author is not to teach any man either to despise or neglect the holy ordinances, appointed by Jesus Christ, for the help of His Church, nor to attribute unto them more than is meet, but to use them as means to bring us to the end; that is, that the Lord hath not given His word, sacraments, and the discipline of the Church, unto His people, to the end that they should satisfy themselves with the outward obedience thereof, nor to think that all is well when they walk therein; but also to be translated into the obedience of that which the word teacheth, and the sacraments signify unto them: that is, to be made like to Jesus Christ, in His life, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, by being partakers with Him of one and the same spirit; consider what we say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

(Signed T. P. (THOMAS PIGGOTT).

"I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy truth from the great congregation." (Psal. xl. 16). "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth man confesseth to salvation." (Rom. x. 10).

THE LAST BOOK OF JOHN SMITH, CALLED THE RETRACTION OF HIS ERRORS, AND
THE CONFIRMATION OF THE TRUTH.

"If any man be in Christ, let him be a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.) "For they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and the lusts." (Gal. v. 24.)

I AM not of the number of those men which assume unto themselves such plenary knowledge and assurance of their ways, and of the perfection and sufficiency thereof, as that they peremptorily censure all men except those of their own understanding, and require that all men upon pain of damnation become subject and captivate in their judgment and walking to their line and level: of which sort are those of our English nation, who publish in print their proclamation against all Churches except those of their own society and fellowship—I mean the double separation, Master Hainsworth and Master Helwys—although the one more near the truth than the other; neither is my purpose, in this my writing, to accuse and condemn other men, but to censure and reform myself. If I should walk with either of the double separation, I must, from the persuasion of mine own alone perfect reformation, reprove all other, and reject them as short of that mark whereto I come: and I must shut my ears from hearing any instruction which others may afford me; for this is the quintessence of the separation, to assume unto themselves a prerogative to teach all men, and to be taught of no man.

Now I have in all my writings hitherto received instruction of others, and professed my readiness to be taught by others, and therefore have I so oftentimes been accused of inconstancy; well, let them think of me as they please, I profess I have changed, and shall be ready still to change for the better: and if it be their glory to be peremptory and immutable in their articles of religion, they may enjoy that glory without my envy, though not without the grief of my heart for them. The Articles of Religion which are the ground of my salvation are these, wherein I differ from no good Christian: That Jesus Christ, the son of God and the son of Mary, is the anointed King, Priest, and Prophet of the Church, the only mediator of the New Testament, and that through true repentance and faith in Him, who alone is our Saviour, we receive remission of sins and the Holy Ghost in this life, and therewith all the redemption of our bodies, and everlasting life in the resurrection of the body; and whosoever walketh according to this rule, I must needs acknowledge him my brother; yea, although he differ from me in divers other particulars. And howsoever in the days of my blind zeal and preposterous imitation of Christ, I was somewhat lavish in censuring and judging others; and namely, in the way of separation called Brownism, yet since having been instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly, and finding my error therein, I protest against that my former course of censuring other persons, and especially for all those hard phrases wherewith I have in any of my writings inveighed against either England or the separation: for England, although I cannot with any good conscience acknowledge the wicked ones mingled with the zealous professors in one congregation to be the true outward visible Church which Christ and His Apostles at the first instituted, which consisted only of penitent persons and believers; yet therefore to say that the zealous professors themselves are antichristian, is a censure such as I cannot justify before the Lord, who is my judge in my conscience. And therefore I utterly revoke and renounce it. Again, howsoever I doubt not but it is an error of the forward professors of the English churches to be mingled with the open wicked in the supper of the Lord, as they daily are, seeing therein they do transgress the first institution of Christ, who ate His supper only with the eleven (for Judas departed soon as he had received the sop of the Passover), yet I cannot therefore conclude the said forward professors under the same judgment, or fellowship of sin, with the wicked ones with whom they partake the supper. Yea, rather I do also renounce that evil and perverse judgment which I have pronounced in my writings, in this particular acknowledging my error therein; further I must needs avouch that the Bishops of the land grievously sin against God: and the forward professors in ruling them so rigorously, urging their subscription, canons, and ceremonies upon men's consciences upon pain of excommunication, deposition, silence, imprisonment, banishment, and the like penalties: and that therein they sit as Antichrist in the temple of God, which is the conscience. Yet, therefore, to say that all the professors of the land, whether preachers or others that remain under their jurisdiction, do submit unto the beast and receive his mark, that I dare not avouch and justify as I have done, for I doubt not but many touch none of their unclean things, but only submit to Christ so far as they are enlightened; and if a sin of ignorance make a man an anti-christian, then I demand where shall we find a Christian. In these three particulars, especially have I transgressed against the professors of the English nation. Generally, all those biting and bitter words, phrases, and speeches, used against the professors of the land I utterly retract and revoke, as not being of the

spirit of Christ, but of the Disciples, who would have called for fire and brimstone from heaven, which Christ rebuketh. Particularly that book against Master Bernard, wherein Master Marbury, Master White, and others are mentioned and cruelly taxed, I retract not for that it is wholly false, but for that it is wholly censorious and critical: and for that therein the contention for outward matters, which are of inferior note, hath broken the rules of love and charity, which is the superior law. Now for the separation, I cannot, nor dare not, in my conscience before the Judge of the whole world justify my writings and dealings against them. For the truth of the matter I doubt not but it is on my side, but the manner of writing is that alone wherein I have failed: for I should have with the spirit of meekness instructed them that are contrary minded, but my words have been stout and mingled with gall, and therefore hath the Lord repayed me home full measure into my bosom, for according to that measure wherewith I measured hath it been measured again unto me, by Master Clifton, especially by Master Hainsworth and Master Bernard. The Lord lay none of our sins to the charge of any of us all, but He of His mercy pass by them: for my part the Lord hath taught me thereby, for hereafter shall I set a watch before my mouth, that I sin not again in that kind and degree. For Master Hainsworth's book, I acknowledge that I erred in the place of the candlestick and altar, but that of the altar is not Master Fenner's error with me, but mine rather with him; for other things, namely, the chief matter in controversy I hold as I did. Yea, which is more, I say that although it be lawful to pray, preach, and sing out of a book for all penitent persons, yet a man regenerate is above all books and scriptures whatsoever, seeing he hath the spirit of God within him, which teacheth him the true meaning of the scriptures, without the which spirit the scriptures are but a dead letter, which is perverted and misconstrued as we see at this day to contrary ends and senses; and that to bind a regenerate man to a book in praying, preaching or singing, is to set the Holy Ghost to school in the one as well as in the other: for the other question of elders with Master Hainsworth, and of Baptism with Master Clifton, and the two Testaments, I hold as I did, and therein I am persuaded I have the truth. If any man say, why then do you not answer the books written in opposition, my answer is, my desire is to end controversies among Christians rather than to make and maintain them, especially in matters of the outward Church and ceremonies; and it is the grief of my heart that I have so long cumbered myself and spent my time therein, and I profess that difference in judgment for matter of circumstance, as are all things of the outward Church, shall not cause me to refuse the brotherhood of any penitent and faithful Christian whatsoever. And now from this day forward do I put an end to all controversies and questions about the outward Church and ceremonies with all men, and resolve to spend my time in the main matters wherein consisteth salvation. Without repentance, faith, remission of sin, and the new creature, there is no salvation—but there is salvation without the truth of all the outward ceremonies of the outward Church. If any man say you answer not because you cannot, I say to him, that I am accounted one that cannot answer is not my fame, but to spend my time in a full answer of those things of the outward Church which I am bound to employ better (necessity calling upon me) would be my sin, and so I had rather be accounted unable to answer, than to be found in sin against my conscience. Again, if I should answer, it would breed further strife among Christians—further, we have no means to publish our writings. But my first answer satisfieth my conscience, and so

I rest, having peace at home in this point. But now to come to Master Helwys, his separation, against which I have done nothing in writing hitherto, notwithstanding I am now bound in conscience to publish an apology of certain imputations cast upon me by him in his writings. As first, the sin against the Holy Ghost, because I have denied some truth which once I acknowledged, and wherewith I was enlightened. Than this can there be no more grievous imputation cast upon any man; than this can there be no higher degree of censuring. What shall I say here for my apology? Shall I say that my heart yet appertaineth to the Lord, that I daily seek mercy and ask forgiveness, that I labour to reform myself wherein I see my error, that I continually search after the truth and endeavour myself to keep a good conscience in all things? But this, haply, will not satisfy Master Helwys. Well, let us examine the points wherein I have forsaken the truth: Succession is the matter wherein I hold as I have written to Master Bernard, that succession is abolished by the Church of Rome, and that there is no true ministry derived from the Apostles through the Church of Rome to England, but that the succession is interrupted and broken off. Secondly, I hold, as I did hold then, succession being broken off and interrupted, it may by two or three gathered together in the name of Christ be renewed and assumed again; and herein there is no difference between Master Helwys and me. Thirdly, Master Helwys said that although there be churches already established, ministers ordained, and sacraments administered orderly, yet men are not bound to join those former churches established, but may, being as yet unbaptized, baptize themselves (as we did) and proceed to build churches of themselves, disorderly (as I take it). Herein I differ from Master Helwys, and therefore he saith I have sinned against the Holy Ghost because I once acknowledged the truth (as Master Helwys calleth it). Here I answer three things:—“ 1. I did never acknowledge it. 2. It is not the truth. 3. Though I had acknowledged it, and it were a truth, yet in denying it I have not sinned against the Holy Ghost. First, I did never acknowledge it, that it was lawful for private persons to baptize when there were true churches and ministers from whence we might have our baptism without sin, as there are forty witnesses that can testify: only this is it which I held, that seeing there was no church to whom we could join with a good conscience, to have baptism from them, therefore we might baptize ourselves. That this is so the Lord knoweth, my conscience witnesseth, and Master Helwys himself will not deny it. Secondly, it is not the truth that two or three private persons may baptize, when there is a true church and ministers established whence baptism may orderly be had: for if Christ himself did fetch His baptism from John, and the Gentiles from the Jews baptized, and if God be the God of order and not of confusion, then surely we must observe this order now, or else disorder is order, and God alloweth disorder; for if Master Helwys' position be true, that every two or three that see the truth of baptism may begin to baptize, and need not join to former true churches where they may have their baptism orderly from ordained ministers, then the order of the primitive church was order for them and those times only, and this disorder will establish baptism of private persons. Yea of women from henceforth to the world's end, as Master Helwys his ground doth evidently afford to him that will scan it. Thirdly, though I had acknowledged that assertion of Master Helwys, and it were the truth, and I now forsake it, it doth not thereupon follow that a man sinneth against the Holy Ghost: for I demand, may not a man forsake a truth upon a temptation,

and obtain remission upon repentance? Did not Peter so in denying Christ? Did not David so, and continued impenitent till the child was born after adultery wit' Bethshabe? A man therefore that upon a temptation forsaketh a known truth, may repent and receive mercies—further, may not a man (as he supposeth) upon force of argument, yield from the known truth to error for conscience sake? Have all those sinned against the Holy Ghost that have separated from England and are returned again? Certainly Master Helwys herein erreth not a little, and breaketh the bond of charity above all men that I ever read or heard, in uttering so sharp a censure upon so weak a ground. Besides, the sin against the Holy Ghost is not in outward ceremonies, but in matter of substance, which is the knowledge of the truth (Heb. vi. 1—10), namely a forsaking of repentance and faith in Christ, and falling to profaneness and Paganism: for I hold no part of saving righteousness to consist in outward ceremonies, for they are only as a crutch for the lame and weak to walk withal till they be cured. Concerning succession, briefly thus much: I deny all succession except in the truth; and I hold we are not to violate the order of the primitive church, except necessity urge a dispensation; and therefore it is not lawful for every one that seeth the truth to baptize, for then there might be as many churches as couples in the world, and none have anything to do with other, which breaketh the bond of love and brotherhood in churches; but, in these outward matters, I dare not any more contend with any man, but desire that we may follow the truth of repentance, faith, and regeneration, and lay aside dissension for mint, comine, and annis seed. Another imputation of Master Helwys is concerning the flesh of Christ. Whereto I say, that he that knoweth not that the first and second flesh of an infant in the mother's womb are to be distinguished, knoweth not yet the grounds of nature and natural reason. I affirmed concerning Christ that His second flesh, that is His nourishment, He had from His mother, and that the Scriptures are plain for it; but, concerning the first matter of Christ's flesh, whence it was, I said thus much: That, although I yield it to be a truth in nature that He had it of His mother Mary, yet I dare not make it such an Article of faith as that if any man will not consent unto it, I should therefore refuse brotherhood with him: and that the Scriptures do not lead us (as far as I conceive) to the searching of that point, whereof Christ's natural flesh was made; but that we should search into Christ's spiritual flesh, to be made flesh of that His flesh, and bone of His bone, in the communion and fellowship of the same spirit. That this was my speech and the sum of my assertion concerning this point, I call the Lord and all that heard as witnesses: whereby appeareth Master Helwys his partiality in reporting this particular. Concerning a secret imputation which Master Helwys, by way of intimation, suggesteth, as though I had received much help of maintenance from his company, or from that company of English people that came over together out of the north parts with me, I affirm thus much: That I never received of them all put together the value of forty shillings to my knowledge, since I came out of England, and of Master Helwys, not the value of a penny; but it is well known to Master Helwys and to all the company, that I have spent as much in helping the poor as Master Helwys hath done, and it is not known that Master Helwys hath spent one penny but I have spent another in any common burthen for the relieving of the poor. All that ever Master Helwys can say is that, when I was sick in England, at Bashforth, I was troublesome and chargeable to him; wherein I confess his kindness, but I would have given

him satisfaction, and he refused it, and in my sickness there was as much brought in as I spent. Another imputation is of some moment, that I should affirm Christ in the flesh to be a figure of Himself in the spirit, and that men are not so much to strive about the natural flesh of Christ as about His spiritual flesh; and that the contention concerning the natural flesh of Christ is like the contention of the soldiers for Christ's coat. True, this I did affirm, and this I defend as the most excellent and comfortable truth in the Scriptures: for who knoweth not, that to know and be made conformable to the similitude of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection in the mortification of sin and the new creature, to be made flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, spiritually in the fellowship of one holy anointing, which is Christ's spiritual flesh; who knoweth not, I say, that this is better than the knowledge of Christ's natural flesh. That Christ's natural flesh is a figure of Christ's spiritual flesh, is plain by Rom. vi. where the Apostle saith that we must be grafted to the similitude of His death, burial, and resurrection; if His death, burial, and resurrection be a similitude or figure, so is His body that died, was buried, and rose again. The like saith the Apostle, Heb. iv. 15, that Christ was tempted in all things in a figure or similitude; but this point is also plain enough, that all Christ's miracles and doings in the flesh, with His sufferings, are figures of those heavenly things which He in the spirit worketh in the regenerate; He cleanseth their leprosy, casteth out the devil, drieth up the bloody issue, rideth to Jerusalem on an ass, stillleth the winds and sea, feedeth the multitude: for Jesus Christ is yesterday and to-day, and the same also for ever. If this be a truth, then, the contention about Christ's natural flesh is in comparison like to the soldiers' contention for His coat. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, saith Christ, and so I rest satisfied in this particular.

**PROPOSITIONS AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, CONTAINING
A CONFESSiON OF FAITH OF CERTAIN ENGLISH PEOPLE, LIVING AT AMSTERDAM.**

1. We believe that there is a God (Heb. xi. 6) against all Epicures and Atheists, which either say in their hearts or utter with their mouths, that there is no God (Psal. xiv. 1; Isaiah xxii. 18).
2. That this God is one in number (1 Cor. viii. 4, 6) against the Pagans or any other that hold a plurality of gods.
3. That God is incomprehensible and ineffable, in regard of His substance or essence that is God's essence can neither be comprehended in the mind, nor uttered by the words of men or angels (Exod. iii. 13-15, and xxxiii. 18-21).
4. That the creatures and Holy Scriptures do not intend to teach us what God is in substance or essence, but what He is in effect and property (Rom. i. 19, 22; Exod. xxxiii. 28).
5. That these terms, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, do not teach God's substance, but only the hinder parts of God: that which may be known of God (Rom. i., Exod. xxxiii).
6. That God may be known by His titles, properties, effects, imprinted, and expressed in the creatures, and Scriptures (John xvii. 3).
7. That to understand and conceive of God in the mind is not the saving knowledge of God, but to be like to God in His effects and properties: to be made conformable to His divine and heavenly attributes. That is the true saving knowledge of God (2 Cor. iii. 18; Matt. v. 48; 2 Peter i. 4), whereunto we ought to give all diligence.
8. That this God manifested in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Matt. iii. 16, 17) is most merciful, most mighty most holy, most just, most wise, most true, most glorious, eternal and infinite (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Psalm xc. 2 and cii. 27).

9. That God before the foundation of the world did foresee, and determine the issue and event of all His works (Acts xv. 18), and that actually in time He worketh all things by His providence, according to the good pleasure of His will (Eph. i. 11), and therefore we abhor the opinion of them, that avouch, that all things happen by fortune or chance (Acts. iv. 27, 28; Matt. x. 29, 30).

10. That God is not the Author or worker of sin (Psal. v. 4; James i. 18), but that God only did foresee and determine what evil the free will of men and angels would do; but He gave no influence, instinct, motion or inclination to the least sin.

11. That God in the beginning created the world viz., the heavens, and the earth and all things that are therein (Gen. i.; Acts xvii. 24). So that the things that are seen, were not of things which did appear (Heb. xi. 3).

12. That God created man to blessedness, according to His image, in an estate of innocence, free without corruption of sin (Gen. i. 27, ii. 17, 25); He created them male and female (to wit) one man and one woman (Gen. i. 27); He framed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into him the breath of life, so the man was a living soul (Gen. ii. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 45). But the woman He made of a rib, taken out of the side of the man (Gen. ii. 21, 22). That God blessed them, and commanded them to increase, and multiply, and to fill the earth, and to rule over it and all creatures therein (Gen. i. 28, ix. 1, 2; Psal. viii. 6).

13. That therefore marriage is an estate honourable amongst all men, and the bed undefiled: viz. betwixt one man and one woman (Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 2), but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

14. That God created man with freedom of will, so that he had ability to choose the good, and eschew the evil, or to choose the evil, and refuse the good, and that this freedom of will was a natural faculty or power, created by God in the soul of man (Gen. ii. 16, 17; iii. 6, 7; Eccl. vii. 29).

15. That Adam sinning was not moved or inclined thereto by God, or by any decree of God but that he fell from his innocence, and died the death alone, by the temptation of Satan, his free will assenting therunto freely (Gen. iii. 6).

16. That the same day that Adam sinned, he died the death (Gen. ii. 17), for the reward of sin is death (Rom. vi. 23), and this is that which the Apostle saith, dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. ii. 1), which is loss of innocence, of the peace of conscience and comfortable presence of God (Gen. iii. 7, 11).

17. That Adam being fallen did not lose any natural power or faculty, which God created in his soul, for the work of the devil, which is (sin), cannot abolish God's works or creatures: and therefore being fallen he still retained freedom of will (Gen. iii. 23, 24).

18. That original sin is an idle term, and that there is no such thing as men intend by the word (Ezek. xviii. 20), because God threatened death only to Adam (Gen. ii. 17) not to his posterity, and because God created the soul (Heb. xii. 9).

19. That if original sin might have passed from Adam to his posterity, Christ's death, which was effectual before Cain and Abel's birth, He being the lamb slain from the beginning of the world, stopped the issue and passage thereof (Rev. xiii. 8).

20. That infants are conceived and born in innocence without sin, and that so dying are undoubtedly saved, and that this is to be understood of all infants, under heaven (Gen. v. 2, i. 27 compared with 1 Cor. xv. 49) for where there is no law there is no transgression, sin is not imputed while there is no law (Rom. iv. 15 and v. 18), but the law was not given to infants, but to them that could understand (Rom. v. 18; Matt. xiii. 9; Neh. viii. 9).

21. That all actual sinners bear the image of the first Adam, in his innocence, fall, and restitution in the offer of grace (1 Cor. xv. 49), and so pass under these three conditions, or threefold estate.

22. That Adam being fallen God did not hate him, but loved him still, and sought his good (Gen. iii. 8—15), neither doth he hate any man that falleth with Adam; but that He loveth mankind, and from His love sent His only begotten Son into the world, to save that which was lost, and to seek the sheep that went astray (John iii. 16).

23. That God never forsaketh the creature till there be no remedy, neither doth He cast away His innocent creature from all eternity; but casteth away men irrecoverable in sin (Isa. v. 4; Ezek. xviii. 23, 32, and xxxiii. 11; Luke xiii. 6, 9).

24. That as there is in all the creatures a natural inclination to their young ones, to do them good, so there is in the Lord toward man; for every spark of goodness in the creature is infinitely good in God (Rom. i. 20; Psal. xix. 4; Rom. x. 18).

25. That as no man begetteth his child to the gallows, nor no potter maketh a pot to break it; so God doth not create or predestinate any man to destruction (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Gen. i. 27; 1 Cor. xv. 49; Gen. v. 8).

26. That God before the foundation of the world hath determined the way of life and salvation to consist in Christ, and that He hath foreseen who would follow it (Eph. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 9), and on the contrary hath determined the way of perdition to consist in infidelity, and in impenitency, and that he hath foreseen who would follow after it (Jude, 4th verse.)

27. That as God created all men according to His image, so hath He redeemed all that fall by actual

sin, to the same end; and that God in His redemption hath not swerved from His mercy, which He manifested in His creation (John i. 8, 16; 2 Cor. v. 19; 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; Ezek. xxxiii. 11).

28. That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that God in His love to His enemies did send Him (John iii. 16); that Christ died for His enemies (Rom. v. 10); that He bought them that deny Him (2 Peter ii. 1), thereby teaching us to love our enemies (Matt. v. 44, 45).

29. That Christ Jesus after His baptism by a voice out of heaven from the Father, and by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, which appeared upon His head in the form of a dove, is appointed the prophet of the church, whom all men must hear (Matt. iii.; Heb. iii. 1, 2); and that both by His doctrine and life, which He led here in the earth, by all His doings and sufferings, He hath declared and published, as the only prophet and lawgiver of His Church, the way of peace and life, the glad tidings of the gospel (Acts iii. 23, 24).

30. That Christ Jesus is the brightness of the glory and the engraven form of the Father's substance, supporting all things by His mighty power (Heb. i. 3); and that He is become the mediator of the New Testament (to wit) the King, Priest, and Prophet of the Church, and that the faithful through Him are thus made spiritual Kings, Priests, and Prophets (Rev. i. 6; 1 John ii. 20; Rev. xix. 10).

31. That Jesus Christ is He which in the beginning did lay the foundation of the heavens and earth which shall perish (Heb. i. 10; Psalm cii. 26); that He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, He is the wisdom of God, which was begotten from everlasting before all creatures (Micah v. 2; Prov. viii. 24; Luke xi. 49); He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God; yet He took to Him the shape of a servant, the Word became flesh (John i. 14), wonderfully by the power of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary: He was of the seed of David according to the flesh, (Phil. ii. 7; Heb. 10; Rom. i. 8); and that He made Himself of no reputation, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto the death of the cross, redeeming us from our vain conversation, not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Himself, as of a lamb without spot and undefiled (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

32. That although the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood offered up unto God His Father upon the cross, be a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, and that God in Him is well pleased, yet it doth not reconcile God unto us, which did never hate us, nor was our enemy, but reconcile us unto God (2 Cor. v. 19), and slayeth the enmity and hatred, which is in us against God (Ephes. i. 14, 17; Rom. i. 30).

33. That Christ was delivered to death for our sins (Rom. iv. 25), and that by His death we have the remission of our sins (Eph. ii. 7), for He cancelled the hand-writing of ordinances, the hatred, the law of commandments in ordinances (Eph. ii. 15; Colos. ii. 14) which was against us (Deut. xxxi. 26); He spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, and triumphed over them on the cross (Colos. ii. 15); by death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. ii. 14).

34. That the enemies of our salvation, which Christ vanquished on His cross, are the gates of hell, the power of darkness, Satan, sin, death, the grave, the curse or condemnation, wicked men, and persecutors (Eph. vi. 12; 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54, 57; Matt. xvi. 18; Rev. xx. 10, 14, 15), which enemies we must overcome no otherwise than Christ hath done (John xxi. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 21; Rev. xiv. 4).

35. That the efficacy of Christ's death is only derived to them, which do mortify their sins, which are grafted with Him to the similitude of His death (Rom. vi. 3-6), which are circumcised with circumcision made without hands, by putting off the sinful body of the flesh, through the circumcision which Christ worketh (Colos. ii. 11) who is the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers (Rom. xv. 8 compared with Deut. xxx. 6).

36. That there are three which bear witness in the earth, the spirit, water and blood, and these three are one in testimony, witnessing that Christ truly died (1 John v. 8) for He gave up the ghost (John xix. 30); and out of His side pierced with a spear came water and blood (verse 34, 35), the cover of the heart being pierced, where there is water contained.

37. That every mortified person hath this witness in himself (1 John v. 10), for the spirit blood, and water of sin is gone, that is the life of sin with the nourishment and cherishiment thereof (1 Pet. iv. 1; Rom. vi. 7; 1 John iii. 6).

38. That Christ Jesus being truly dead was also buried (John xix. 39, 42), and that He lay in the grave the whole Sabbath of the Jews; but in the grave He saw no corruption (Psalm xvi. 10; Acts ii. 31).

39. That all mortified persons are also buried with Christ, by the baptism, which is into His death (Rom. vi. 4; Colos. ii. 12); keeping their Sabbath with Christ in the grave (that is) resting from their own works as God did from His (Heb. iv. 10), waiting there in hope for a resurrection (Psalm xvi. 9).

40. That Christ Jesus early in the morning, the first day of the week, rose again after His death and burial (Matt. xxviii. 6) for our justification (Rom. iv. 25), being mightily declared to be the Son of God, by the Spirit of sanctification, in the resurrection from the dead (Rom. i. 4).

41. That these that are grafted with Christ to the similitude of His death and burial shall also be to the similitude of His resurrection (Rom. vi. 4, 5); for He doth quicken or give life unto them, together with Himself (Colos. ii. 12; Eph. ii. 5, 6); for that is their salvation, and it is by grace (Eph. ii. 5; 1 John v. 11, 12, 13; Titus iii. 5, 6, 7).

42. That this quickening or reviving of Christ, this laver of regeneration, this renewing of the Holy Ghost, is our justification and salvation (Titus iii. 6, 7). This is that pure river of water of life clear as

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crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb (Rev. xxii. 1); which also floweth out of the belly of him that believeth in Christ (John vii. 8); this is those precious promises whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, by flying the corruptions that are in the world through lust (2 Pet. i. 4); this is the fruit of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God; this is the white stone wherein there is a name written, which no man knoweth, save he that receiveth it. This is the morning star, this is the new name, the name of God, the name of the City of God; the new Jerusalem which descendeth from God out of heaven; this is the hidden manna, that white clothing, ey salve and gold, and that heavenly supper which Christ promiseth to them, that overcome (Rev. ii. 7, 17, 18, and iii. 5, 12, 18, 20).

43. That there are three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one in testimony, witnessing the resurrection of Christ. The Father saith thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts xiii. 33-35). The Son testifieth of his own resurrection being forty days with His disciples (Act. i. 8). The Holy Ghost testifieth the same whom Christ sent to His disciples upon the day of Pentecost (Act. ii.).

44. That every person that is regenerate and risen again with Christ hath these three aforesaid witnesses in himself (1 Joh. v. 10); for Christ doth dwell in his heart by faith (Eph. iii. 17); and the Father dwelleth with the Son (Joh. xiv. 23); and the Holy Ghost likewise (1 Cor. iii. 16); and that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost is with them (2 Cor. xiii. 18).

45. That Christ having forty days after His resurrection conversed with His disciples (Acts i. 3), ascended locally into the heavens (Acts i. 9), which must contain Him unto the time that all things be restored (Acts iii. 21).

That they which are risen with Christ, ascend up spiritually with Him, seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and that they set their affections on heavenly things, and not on earthly things (Col. iii. 1-5).

46. That Christ now being received into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God (Mark xvi. 9), having led captivity captive, and given gifts unto men (Eph. iv. 8); that God hath now highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, in earth and under the earth (Phil. ii. 9, 10), that He hath obtained all power both in heaven and in earth (Matt. xxviii. 18), and hath made all things subject under His feet, and hath appointed Him over all things to be the head to the church, that is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all things (Eph. i. 2-23).

47. That the regenerate do sit together with Christ Jesus in heavenly places (Eph. ii. 6), that they sit with Him in His throne as He sitteth with the Father in His throne (Rev. iii. 21), that they have power over nations, and rule them with a rod of iron, and as a potter's vessel they are broken in pieces (Rev. ii. 26, 27); and that sitting on twelve thrones, they do judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28), which spiritually is to put all their enemies in subjection under their feet, so that the evil one doth not touch them (1 John v. 18), nor the gates of hell prevail against them (Matt. xvi. 28), and that they are become pillars in the house of God, and go no more out (Rev. iii. 12).

48. That Christ Jesus being exalted at the right hand of God the Father, far above all principalities and powers, might, and domination, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to come (Eph. i. 21), hath received of His Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, which He also shed forth upon His disciples on the Day of Pentecost (Act ii. 33).

49. That Christ Jesus, in His resurrection, ascension, and exaltation, is more and rather Lord and Christ, Saviour, anointed, and King, than in His humiliation, sufferings and death (Acts ii. 36; Phil. ii. 7, 11), for the end is more excellent than the means, and His sufferings were the way by the which He entered into His glory (Luke xxiv. 16), and so by consequent the efficacy of His resurrection in the new creature, is more noble and excellent, than the efficacy of His death in the mortification and remission of sins.

50. That the knowledge of Christ according to the flesh is of small profit (2 Cor. v. 16, 17), and the knowledge of Christ's genealogy and history, is no other but that which the Devil hath as well if not better than any man living; but the knowledge of Christ according to the spirit is effectual to salvation, which is spiritually to be grafted to the similitude of Christ's birth, life, miracles, doings, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation (Rom. vi. 8, 6).

51. That Christ Jesus, according to the flesh and history in His doings and suffering, is a great mystery, and divine sacrament of Himself, and of His ministry in the spirit, and of those spiritual things which He worketh in those which are to be heirs of salvation (Rom. vi. 3, 6; Eph. ii. 5, 6), and that spiritually He performeth all those miracles in the regenerate which He wrought in His flesh; He healeth their leprosy, bloody issue, blindness, dumbness, deafness, lameness, palsy, fever, He casteth out the devils and unclean spirits, He raiseth the dead, rebuketh the winds and the sea, and it is calm; He feedeth thousands with the barley loaves and fishes (Matt. viii. 16, 17, compared with Isaiah liii. 4, John vi. 26, 27).

52. That the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son (John xiv. 26, and xvi. 7); that He is the eternal spirit, whereby Christ offered himself without spot to God (Heb. ix. 14); that He is that other comforter, which Christ asketh, obtaineth, and sendeth from the Father (John xiv. 16), which dwelleth in the regenerate (1 Cor. iii. 16), which leadeth them into all truth (John xvi. 13), He is that anointing which teacheth them all things, and that they have no need that any man teach them, but as the same anointing teacheth (1 John ii. 20, 27).

53. That although there be divers gifts of the Spirit yet there is but one Spirit, which distributeth to every one as He will (2 Cor. xii. 4, 11; Eph. iv. 4), that the outward gifts of the spirit which the Holy Ghost poureth forth, upon the Day of Pentecost upon the disciples, in tongues and prophecy, and gifts, and healing, and miracles, which is called the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire (Acts. i. 5) were only a figure of and an hand leading to better things, even the most proper gifts of the spirit of sanctification, which is the new creature; which is the one baptism (Eph. iv. 4, compared with Act ii. 38, 38, and with Luke x. 17, 20).

54. That John Baptist and Christ are two persons, their ministries are two ministries several, and their baptisms are two baptisms, distinct the one from the other (John i. 20; Acts xiii. 25; Acts i. 4, 5; Matt. iii. 11.

55. That John taught the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, baptizing with water to amendment of life (Matt. iii. 11), thus preparing a way for Christ and His baptism (Luke iii. 3, 6), by bringing men to repentance and faith in the Messias, whom he pointed out with the finger (saying), behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world (John i. 31, 29; Act xix. 4).

56. That Christ is stronger, and hath a more excellent office and ministry than John (Matt. iii. 11); that He baptiseth with the Holy Ghost and fire; that He cometh and walketh in the way which John hath prepared: and that the new creature followeth repentance (Luke iii. 6).

57. That repentance and faith in the Messias, are the conditions to be performed on our behalf, for the obtaining of the promises (Acts ii. 38; John i. 12); that the circumcision of the heart, mortification and the promise of the spirit, that is, the new creature, are the promises which are made to the aforesaid conditions (Dent. xxx. 6; Acts ii. 38; Gal. iii. 14; 2 Pet. i. 4, 5), which promises are all yea and Amen in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. i. 20), and that in the regenerate (Gal. iii. 16).

58. That repentance and faith are wrought in the hearts of men, by the preaching of the word, outwardly in the Scriptures, and creatures, the grace of God preventing us by the motions and instinct of the spirit, which a man hath power to receive or reject (Matt. xxiii. 37; Acts vii. 51; Acts vi. 10; Rom. x. 14, 18), that our justification before God consisteth not in the performance of the conditions which God requireth of us, but in the partaking of the promises, the possessing of Christ, remission of sins, and the new creature.

59. That God the Father, of His own good will doth beget us, by the word of truth (James i. 18), which is an immortal seed (1 Pet. i. 28), not the doctrine of repentance and faith which may be lost (Luke viii. 18); and that God the Father, in our regeneration, neither needeth nor useth the help of any creature, but that the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, immediately worketh that work in the soul, where the free will of man can do nothing (John ii. 13).

60. That such as have not attained the new creature, have need of the scriptures, creatures and ordinances of the Church, to instruct them, to comfort them, to stir them up the better to perform the condition of repentance to the remission of sins (2 Pet. i. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 26; Eph. iv. 12—23).

61. That the new creature which is begotten of God, needeth not the outward scriptures, creatures, or ordinances of the church, to support or help them (2 Cor. xiii. 10, 12; 1 Joh. ii. 27; 1 Cor. i. 15, 16; Rev. xxi. 23), seeing he hath three witnesses in himself, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: which are better than all scriptures, or creatures whatsoever.

62. That as Christ who was above the law notwithstanding was made under the law, for our cause: so the regenerate in love to others, can and will do no other, than use the outward things of the church, for the gaining and supporting of others: and so the outward church and ordinances are always necessary, for all sorts of persons whatsoever (Matt. iii. 15, xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. viii. 9).

63. That the new creature although he be above the law and scriptures, yet he can do nothing against the law or scriptures, but rather all his doings shall serve to the confirming and establishing of the law (Rom. iii. 31). Therefore he can neither lie, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill, nor hate any man, or do any other fleshly action, and therefore all fleshly libertinism is contrary to regeneration, detestable, and damnable (John viii. 34, Rom. vi. 15, 16, 18; 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19; 1 John v. 18).

64. That the outward church visible, consists of penitent persons only, and of such as believing in Christ, bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life (1 Tim. vi. 8, 5; 2 Tim. iii. 1, 5; Acts xix. 4).

65. That the visible church is a mystical figure outwardly, of the true, spiritual invisible church; which consisteth of the spirits of just and perfect men only, that is of the regenerate (Rev. i. 20, compared with Rev. xxi. 2, 23, 27).

66. That repentance is the change of the mind from evil to that which is good (Matt. iii. 2), a sorrow for sin committed, with a humble heart for the same; and a resolution to amend for the time to come; with an unfeigned endeavour therein (2 Cor. vii. 8, 11; Isaiah i. 16, 17; Jer. xxxi. 18, 19).

67. That when we have done all that we can we are unprofitable servants, and all our righteousness is as a stained cloth (Luke xvii. 20), and that we can only suppress and lop off the branches of sins, but the root of sin we cannot pluck up out of our hearts (Jer. iv. 4, compared with Deut. xxx. 6, 8).

68. That faith is a knowledge in the mind of the doctrine of the law and gospel contained in the prophetical, and apostolical scriptures of the Old and New Testament: accompanying repentance with an assurance that God, through Christ, will perform unto us His promises of remission of sins, and mortification, upon the condition of our unfeigned repentance, and amendment of life (Rom. x. 18, 14, 15; Acts v. 30-82, and Act ii. 38, 39; Heb. xi. 1; Mark i. 15.)

69. That all penitent and faithful Christians are brethren in the communion of the outward church, wheresoever they live, by what name soever they are known, which in truth and zeal, follow repentance and faith, though compassed with never so many ignorances and infirmities; and we salute them all with a holy kiss, being heartily grieved that we which follow after one faith, and one spirit, one Lord, and one God, one body, and one baptism, should be rent into so many sects and schisms: and that only for matters of less moment.

70. That the outward baptism of water, is to be administered only upon such penitent and faithful persons as are (aforesaid), and not upon innocent infants, or wicked persons (Matt. iii. 2, 3, compared with Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, and John iv. 1).

71. That in Baptism to the penitent person, and believer, there is presented, and figured, the spiritual baptism of Christ, (that is) the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and fire: the baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ: even the promise of the Spirit, which he shall assuredly be made partaker of, if he continue to the end (Gal. iii. 14; Matt. iii. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Rom. vi. 3, 6; Col. ii. 10).

72. That in the outward supper which only baptised persons must partake, there is presented and figured before the eyes of the penitent and faithful, that spiritual supper, which Christ maketh of His flesh and blood: which is crucified and shed for the remission of sins (as the bread is broken and the wine poured forth), and which is eaten and drunken (as is the bread and wine bodily) only by those which are flesh, of His flesh, and bone of His bone: in the communion of the same spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13; Rev. iii. 20, compared with 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26; John vi. 53, 58).

73. That the outward baptism and supper do not confer, and convey grace and regeneration to the participants or communicants: but as the word preached, they serve only to support and stir up the repentance and faith of the communicants till Christ come, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in their hearts (1 Cor. xi. 26; 2 Peter, i. 19; 1 Cor. i. 5-8).

74. That the sacraments have the same use that the word hath; that they are a visible word, and that they teach to the eye of them that understand as the word teacheth the ears of them that have ears to hear (Prov. x. 12), and therefore as the word appertaineth not to infants, no more do the sacraments.

75. That the preaching of the word, and ministry of the sacraments, representeth the ministry of Christ in the spirit; who teacheth, baptiseth, and feedeth the regenerate, by the Holy Spirit inwardly and invisibly.

76. That Christ hath set in his outward church two sorts of ministers: viz., some who are called pastors, teachers or elders, who administer in the word and sacraments, and others who are called Deacons, men and women: whose ministry is, to serve tables and wash the saints' feet (Acts vi. 2-4; Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 8, 11, and chap. v).

77. That the separating of the impenitent, from the outward communion of the Church, is a figure of the eternal rejection, and reprobation of them that persist impenitent in sin (Rev. xxi. 27, and xxxi. 14-15, Matt. xvi. 18 and xviii. 18; John xx. 23, compared with Rev. iii. 12).

78. That none are to be separated from the outward communion of the Church but such as forsake repentance, which deny the power of Godliness (2 Tim. iii. 5), and namely that sufficient admonition go before, according to the rule (Matt. xviii. 15-18), and that none are to be rejected for ignorance or errors, or infirmities so long as they retain repentance and faith in Christ (Rom. xiv., and 1 Thessa. v. 14; Rom. xvi. 17, 18), but they are to be instructed with meekness; and the strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak; and that we are to support one another through love.

79. That a man may speak a word against the Son, and be pardoned (that is), a man may err in the knowledge of Christ's History, and in matters of the outward church, and be forgiven, doing it in an ignorant zeal; but he that speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost (that is) that after illumination forsaketh repentance and faith in Christ, persecuting them, trampling under foot the blood of the covenant: returning with the dog to the vomit; that such shall never be pardoned, neither in this world, nor in the world to come (Matt. xii. 31, 32, compared with Hebrews vi. 4, and chap. x. 26-29; 2 Pet. ii. 20, 22).

80. That persons separated from the communion of the church, are to be accounted as heathens and publicans (Matt. xviii.), and that they are so far to be shunned, as they may pollute: notwithstanding being ready to instruct them, and to relieve them in their wants: seeking by all lawful means to win them: considering that excommunication is only for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor. v. 5, 11; Matt. xi. 19; Luke xv. 1, 2).

81. That there is no succession in the outward church, but that all the succession is from heaven, and that the new creature only, hath the thing signified, and substance, whereof the outward church and ordinances are shadows (Col. ii. 16, 17), and therefore he alone hath power, and knoweth aright, how to administer in the outward church, for the benefit of others (John vi. 45): yet God is not the God of confusion but of order, and therefore we are in the outward church, to draw as near the first institution as may be, in all things (1 Cor. xiv. 28); therefore it is not lawful for every brother to administer the word and sacraments (Eph. iv. 11, 12, compared with 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6, 28, 29).

82. That Christ hath set in his outward church the vocation of master and servant, parents and children, husband and wife (Eph. v. 22-25, chap. vi. 1, 4, 5, 9), and hath commanded every soul to be subject to the higher powers (Rom. xiii. 1), not because of wrath only, but for conscience sake (verse 5) that we are to give them their duty, as tribute, and custom, honour, and fear, not speaking evil of them that are in authority

(Jude, verse 8), but praying and giving thanks for them (1 Tim. ii. 1, 2), for that is acceptable in the sight of God, even our Saviour.

83. That the office of the magistrate, is a disposition or permissive ordinance of God for the good of mankind : that one man like the brute beasts devour not another (Rom. xiii.), and that justice and civility, may be preserved among men: and that a magistrate may so please God in his calling, in doing that which is righteous and just in the eyes of the Lord, that he may bring an outward blessing upon himself, his posterity and subjects (2 Kings, x. 30, 31).

84. That the magistrate is not by virtue of his office to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, to force and compel men to this or that form of religion, or doctrine : but to leave Christian religion free, to every man's conscience, and to handle only civil transgressions (Rom. xiii.), injuries and wrongs of man against man, in murder, adultery, theft, etc., for Christ only is the king, and lawgiver of the church and conscience (James iv. 12).

85. That if the magistrate will follow Christ, and be His disciple, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Christ : he must love his enemies and not kill them, he must pray for them, and not punish them, he must feed them and give them drink, not imprison them, banish them, dismember them, and spoil their goods ; he must suffer persecution and affliction with Christ, and be slandered, reviled, blasphemed, scourged, buffeted, spit upon, imprisoned and killed with Christ; and that by the authority of magistrates, which things he cannot possibly do, and retain the revenge of the sword.

86. That the Disciples of Christ, the members of the outward church, are to judge all their causes of difference, among themselves, and they are not to go to law, before the magistrates (1 Cor. vi. 1, 7), and that all their differences must be ended by (yea) and (nay) without an oath (Matt. v. 33-37; James v. 12).

87. That the Disciples of Christ, the members of the outward church, may not marry any of the profane, or wicked, godless people of the world, but that every one is to marry in the Lord (1 Cor. vii. 39), every man one only wife, and every woman one only husband (1 Cor. vii. 2).

88. That parents are bound to bring up their children in instruction and information of the Lord (Eph. vi. 4), and that they are to provide for their family : otherwise they deny the faith, and are worse than infidels (1 Tim. v. 8).

89. That notwithstanding if the Lord shall give a man any special calling, as Simon, and Andrew, James, and John, then they must leave all, father, ship, nets, wife, children, yea, and life also to follow Christ (Luke xiv. 26; Matt. iv. 18-20).

90. That in the necessities of the church, and poor brethren, all things are to be common (Acts iv. 32), yea and that one church is to administer to another in time of need (Gal. ii. 10; Acts xi. 30; 1 Cor. iv. 8, and chap. ix.).

91. That all the bodies of all men that are dead, shall by the power of Christ, be raised up, out of his own proper seed, as corn out of the seed rotting in the earth (1 Cor. xv.).

92. That these which live in the last day shall not die, but shall be changed in a moment ; in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (1 Cor. xv. 52), for the trump shall blow, and the dead shall be raised up incorruptible, and we shall be changed, not in substance but in qualities ; for the bodies shall rise in honour, in power, in incorruption, and spiritual : being sown in dishonour, in weakness, in corruption, and natural (1 Cor. xv. 42, 44).

93. That the bodies being raised up, shall be joined to the souls, whereto formerly they were united ; which till that time were preserved in the hands of the Lord (Rev. vi. 9, Job xix. 25-27).

94. That it is appointed to all men that they shall once die, and then cometh the judgment (Heb. ix. 27), and that the change of them that live on the earth at the last day, shall be as it were a death unto them (1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thes. iv. 15-17).

95. That there shall be a general, and universal day of judgment, when everyone shall receive according to the things that are done in the flesh, whether they be good or evil (1 Cor. v. 10, Acts xvii. 31).

96. That of that day and hour knoweth no man ; no, not the Angels in heaven, neither the Son Himself, but the Father only. (Mark xiii. 32).

97. That Christ Jesus that man, shall be judge in that day (Acts xvii. 31), that he shall come in the clouds with glory ; and all His holy angels with Him (Matt. xxv), with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God (1 Thes. iv. 16), and He shall sit upon the throne of His glory ; and all nations shall be gathered before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats, setting the sheep on His right hand and the goats on the left (Matt. xxv.).

98. That the king shall say to the sheep, the regenerate, which are on His right hand, " Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world ;" and it shall be performed accordingly (Matt. xxv).

99. That the king shall say to them on His left hand, the goats, the wicked ones, " Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels," and it shall be accomplished accordingly (Matt. xxv).

100. That after the judgment ended and accomplished, and the last enemy that is death being put under the feet of Christ, then the Son himself shall deliver up the kingdom into the hands of the Father, and shall be subject unto Him, that subdued all things unto Him, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24-28).

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN SMITH.

"The righteous perisheth and no man considereth it in heart, and merciful men are taken away, and no man understandeth that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1, 2.

"Then I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write the dead which die in the Lord are fully blessed: even so saith the spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

AFTER a certain time (living at Amsterdam) he began to practise physic (knowing that a man was bound to use the gifts that the Lord had bestowed upon him for the good of others), in administering whereof he usually took nothing of the poorer sort; and if they were rich he took but half so much as other doctors did: excepting some, who being well able and well minded, urged more upon him; some demanding of him why he took no more, alleging that he must pay his house-rent, maintain his wife and children. He answered, you must give me leave herein to use my conscience. Moreover he was so mindful and so careful for the poor, that he would rather live sparingly in his house (or as we say) neglect himself, his wife, and children, than that any should be in extremity. Upon a time, seeing one slenderly appareled, he sent them his gown, to make them clothes. It being refused (saying that their wants was not so great as he supposed), he answered, that if they did refuse it the fault should be upon themselves, for he was willing to give it, and that it was but his duty, according to that speech in the gospel, “He that hath two coats, let him part with him that hath none.” So that he was well beloved of most men, and hated of none save a few of our English nation, who had nothing against him but that he differed from them in some points of religion; notwithstanding he would beseech the Lord to open their eyes to see better, and to forgive them their sins: and he was ready to help any of them as occasion was offered him. Thus living uprightly in the sight of all men, being both painful and careful to do good to all, for soul and body, according to his ability: It pleased the Lord at the length to visit him with sickness, and with a disease whereby he perceived that his life should not long continue, yet remaining about seven weeks, during the which space he behaved himself Christian-like, examining his life, confessing his sins, praying for patience, having always confidence in the mercy and favour of the Lord towards him in the end. A day or two before his death the brethren having recourse unto him, and some of them remaining by him, he uttered these speeches:—Concerning the Church of England, the Separation, and Mr. Helwic, saith he, I do confess my grievous sins and corruptions in the manner of my carriage towards them in words and writings; but as for the points of controversy betwixt us, I am persuaded I had the better of them; and as for my faith, saith he, as I have taught and written, so I now hold—that the Gospel hath two parts: the promise on God's behalf, and the condition on our behalf. The promise is forgiveness of sins and the spirit of regeneration, wherein we can do nothing, but must be mere patients; the condition, wherein we must be co-workers with the Lord, is to turn from our sins, and to believe his promises, He preventing us with His grace: the which if we faithfully do, then, saith he, the Lord will perform His promise unto us, wherein in some measure I have done my endeavour unfeignedly, yet I confess I have been and am too short therein, but for my weakness and wants I fly to the abundant mercy of the Lord, who will help those which seek unto Him, and if you know

any better, I beseech you instruct me before my death; and if I live (saith he) I will walk with no other people but you all my days. He desired his wife also so to do, being persuaded that she would: and wished that his children should remain with us, praying us to inform them wherein we saw them do amiss. And as for himself, he did now desire nothing but that the Lord would take away his sins and purge his heart, and then he were fit for Him. And being desired that if the Lord did let him feel it while he were able to speak, that he would manifest it unto us for our comfort, which he promised to do, saying that if the Lord would vouchsafe that mercy it might be a testimony to the whole world, so resting under the hand of God waiting his good pleasure, one coming unto him, and asking how he did, "I wait for death" (saith he), "for death." "But," saith she, "I hope you look for another comfort first." "I mean," saith he, "the death of my sins." After complaining of his sins, one of the brethren alleging unto him the words of the prophet, where he saith that the Lord will not despise the broken in heart, "No," said he, "for I know He is a merciful God, and I seeking unto Him I know He will seek me with the prodigal child." Another saying unto him, "I hope you shall do well; I trust you appertain to the Lord," "Yes," said he, "I do appertain unto Him, for I seek Him and I run not from Him," alleging the words of the prophet where he saith, "Seek my face: my heart answered, I will seek thy face." Another coming unto him, said, "We must part from you," "No," said he, "we shall never part, for we are all of one spirit;" "But," she said, "I mean with your body." He answered "Let that go, let that go," shaking his hand. The same person having a sad and heavy countenance, he said, "Why do you weep, and break my heart?" "But," saith she, "I weep not." He answered her, "But some come unto me weeping. I pray you let us depart comfortably, and weep not as those that are without hope." Afterward, calling his children to him, as Jacob did his sons a little before his death, he began to instruct them in the principles of religion, teaching them that there is one God, creator of all things, one Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone salvation consisteth, one Holy Spirit, one faith, one baptism, manifesting that the baptism of infants was unlawful. And demanding of his children whether they had rather that he should die or live, they weeping said that he might live. "If I live," saith he, "I must correct you, and beat you, but you must know that I do it not because I hate you, but because I love you, even as now the Lord chasteneth me, not because He hateth me, but for that He loveth me." The brethren then speaking privately among themselves, he said, "I pray you, brethren, speak up, that I may learn also." And one asking him a question, being a stranger, which tended to strife, he would not permit an answer, "Because," said he, "I desire to hear no contention now," being desirous to end strife and contention in whomsoever he perceived it to be, whereby he shewed himself to be of the number of those which are the blessed children of God, as Christ pronounceth the peacemakers to be (Matt. v.). In the night before his death, some waking with him, he desired them to raise up some speech of comfort unto him. It being answered that he knew all things which we could say unto him, he answered, "That is not it; for when the Lord offereth me anything I speak, and when he doth not I am silent." And, speaking of the fruit of the country that it was some cause of diseases, correcting himself, "I think," saith he, "it is but an idle speech," so careful was he not to speak vainly. Afterwards, awaking out of a slumber, he asked, "Where are the brethren?" We coming unto him, he said, "Come, let us praise the Lord, let us praise the Lord; He is so gracious and

good unto me ; yea, He dealeth wonderfully mercifully with me.” His wife then asking him, saying, “Have you obtained your desire?” “No,” said he, “but He maketh me able to bear all that He layeth upon me, and to pass through it.” Being answered that it was the performance of God’s promise, who will lay no more upon His than they are able to bear, “It is true,” saith he, “for I find the scriptures so true by experience as can be.” In the morning, being asked if we should praise God for that He had given him strength and ability to pass that night, “Yes,” saith he, “let us praise His name, and though I cannot be the mouth, yet I will be the ear; and let us come before the Lord with an upright heart, for that is well pleasing unto Him.” So, drawing nearer unto his end, at length he, lifting up his hands, said, “The Lord hath holpen me; the Lord hath holpen me.” His wife asking him if he had received his desire, “Yes,” said he, “I praise the Lord, He hath now holpen me, and hath taken away my sins,” and not long after, stretching forth his hands and his feet, he yielded up the ghost, whereby his life and death being both correspondent to his doctrine, it is a great means both to comfort us, and to confirm us in the truth.

The eye and ear witnesses of these things are the brethren.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COURSE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1640 (*continued*). THE INCREASE OF THE PURITANS, BAPTISTS, AND BROWNISTS. THE VIRGINIA COMPANY FOUND A COLONY IN AMERICA. THE COMPANY IS A PECUNIARY FAILURE. THEY AT LAST INVITE THE SEPARATISTS IN HOLLAND TO EMIGRATE. JOHN ROBINSON'S CHURCH AT LEYDEN ACCEPT THE INVITATION, AND FOUND THE CHURCH OF THE "PILGRIM FATHERS" AT PLYMOUTH. LAUD PERSECUTES THE PURITAN PARTY, AND SUPPORTS THE HIGH CHURCH PARTY. ACCESSION OF CHARLES I. RELIGIOUS AGITATION.

WE now return to the course of religious affairs in England. James the first came to the throne in 1603. Great hopes were entertained that from his Presbyterian education he would side with the Puritan party. He disappointed all their hopes. His sympathies were in favour of the Romish church. His reign was signalized by the publication of our present version of the Scriptures, in 1611. The position of the Puritans and the prelatrical party in the Church was not materially altered, except that the Puritans, Baptists, and Brownists were continually increasing. In 1618, John Selden, one of the most learned men in England,* published his celebrated "History of Tythes."

* "Price," vol. i., p. 530.

"Never a fiercer storm," says Fuller "fell on all parsonage barns, since the Reformation, than what this treatise raised up." The rage of his enemies knew no bounds, and with the fear of the Court of High Commission before his eyes, he "humbly acknowledged his error in publishing the 'History of Tythes,'" but, as in the case of Galileo, men deemed in spite of the recantation of his "error," that he had absolutely destroyed the ground of the supposed "divine right" of the clergy to tythes. In the year 1618, the "Book of Sports" was published, and the clergy of Lancashire were commanded to read it from their pulpits. It was withdrawn in consequence of the opposition of Archbishop Abbot. The experiments in colonial Church Government in the reign of James I. and Charles I. present a most curious picture. It appears to have been the will of the Head of the Church to allow the human mind to exhaust every expedient in forming religious societies contrary to the principles laid down in the New Testament, and that the practical results of these experiments should eventually turn to the instruction and blessing of His Church. The Church of England, in 1610, contemplated the formation of a colony in Virginia, and the following extracts * of "the articles, laws, orders divine and politic, for the colony first established by Sir Thomas Gates," give an idea of the methods, then deemed to be highly christian, of spreading the Gospel of Christ. The view was, that the perfection of the christian religion, required that "no Brownists or factious Separatists" should be suffered. The orders in reference to religious observances in the colony embraced the following items:—To "speak maliciously" against the "holy and blessed Trinity," or the Articles of the Christian

* Waddington's "Congregational History," pp. 170 to 173.

faith—the punishment of *death*. “Blasphemy” or “unlawful oaths,”—first punishment to be “severe,”—for the second offence “to have a bodkin thrust through his tongue,”—the third offence, “*death*.” No man was to “speak a word” or “do any act” to the “derision” or “despite” of God’s holy word, “on pain of death.” If he “unworthily demeaned himself unto any preacher or minister,”—to be *openly whipt* three times and ask “public forgiveness” in church on Sunday. Every man and woman, “on the first tolling of the bell, shall on *working days* repair unto the church to hear divine service, upon pain of losing his or her day’s allowance for the first omission,—for the second to be whipt,—for the third offence, the galleys for six months.” Sabbath breaking was punished in the second offence by whipping, and the third, *death!*” Not a man or woman who should arrive in the colony, was to omit to “give an account of his or their faith and religion, and repair to the minister.” If the minister, seeing his ignorance of the principles of the christian religion, advises him “in love and charity to repair to him” for further instruction,—and the man refuses, he is to be “whipt,”—for the second, “to be whipt twice,”—and for the third to be “whipt every day” until he professes his sorrow in the church and repairs to the minister for further instruction.

The laudable intentions of the founders of the colony, were in their opinion to be fully accomplished by thus “displaying the banner of Christ Jesus” and “fighting with the Dragon.” They believed that their names would be “eternized,”—and that their attempt would serve as “a pattern” and “mirror” to the church universal. This was accomplished, not by the success of their scheme of church government, but by its failure.

This Virginia Company, which had been formed in 1606, having spent more than £100,000, in this and other experiments in colonization, now had suggested to it by Sir Ferdinand Gorges, that "means might be used to draw into those enterprizes some of those families that had retired to Holland for scruple of conscience, giving them such freedom as might stand with their liking." * After some hesitation, finding that the interest of the Company would be used to secure them "freedom of religion," John Robinson's Church at Leyden resolved to form a colony in America. The landing of the "Pilgrim Fathers" at Cape Cod, where the two great seaport towns of Plymouth and Boston were shortly founded, is an event of vast importance in the religious history of England and the world. They embarked at Delf-haven. The farewell words of John Robinson, to the portion of his Church who embarked in the *May-flower*, will for ever hallow the memory of the Church at Leyden. "I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. If God reveal anything to you by other instruments of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry, for I am verily persuaded, I am very confident, the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans can't be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw. Whatever part of his will our good God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it,—and the

* Dr. Waddington's "Congregational History," p. 204.

Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is an evil much to be lamented, for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God,—but, were they living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received. I beseech you to remember it;—’tis an article of your church covenant;—that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God.” These are words never to be forgotten. The unwillingness of Christians to receive truth from unwelcome quarters, has been the stumbling block of every Church. It is worthy of note, that in the covenants of the Independent Churches in England to walk in Gospel ordinances, they inserted the clause “till God should give them ‘new light’” or “further light.”*

James I. died in 1625. His despotic principles roused the spirit of the constitutional or patriotic party, while his conduct of public and foreign affairs disgusted the whole nation. The result of his reign was to array the virtue, the public spirit, and the intellect of the country on the side of the Puritans.† The state of England in a religious point of view was deplorable. The Puritans were Calvinists. The doctrines of Arminius made rapid progress among the High Church party, and were considered by the Puritans to tend to Romanism. The pulpits rang with controversy which tended little to the progress of religion. The bishops were unable to obtain preachers of ability, and

* See “Account of the Church at Rothwell, founded in 1656, by Norman Glass,” London, 1871.

† It will be noticed that, as before specially noted, we use the word “Puritan” to describe the Presbyterian party.

the ranks of the clergy were filled up with men who excited the pity of the educated. "Pious churchmen," says Mr. Marsden, in his "History of the Early Puritans," "who had never concerned themselves with the surplice controversy, and were perfectly indifferent as to the cross in baptism and the ring in marriage, found themselves compelled in self-defence to associate with the only party by whom they were not insulted." Mrs. Hutchinson and Mr. Baxter agree in their testimony, that in these times, the rabble, encouraged by the Court and Prelatical party, indifferently harassed and persecuted any person of real piety (whatever his sentiments might be) as a "puritan," because if so, he was deemed a disloyal person who could obtain no redress.

The inevitable reaction from Puritan doctrine, had now created a party in the Church, who undervalued the work of the Reformers. Their rule was "Catholic antiquity." Laud, though not yet archbishop, had commenced to exert the influence which now causes him to be hailed, by the school he represents, as the true Reformer of the Church of England. The Papists were countenanced by the Court, popish recusants were released from prison, while the laws were enforced against the Puritans with the utmost severity, and the increase of popery alarmed the protestant feeling of the country, an alarm which the incidents of the Spanish marriage negotiation did not tend to allay. "Puritans," says Carlyle, "in the better ranks, and in every rank, abounded. Already in conscious act, or in clear tendency, the far greater part of the serious thought and manhood of England had declared itself Puritan." "There needs no prophetical spirit," said Bishop Hall in 1622, "to discern by a small cloud that there is a storm coming towards our church, such an one which shall not only drench our

plumes, but shake our peace.”* Already the fearful vision appeared to that excellent man, of “that anarchical fashion of Independent congregations, which I see and lament to see, affected by too many not without woful success. We are gone, we are lost in a most miserable confusion!” The Puritan party were disheartened and cast down by the severities of Laud; and encouraged by the success of the little band of the Pilgrim Fathers, they sent out six ships to found the Massachusetts colony. They landed on the 24th of June, 1629 and founded the towns of Salem and Newton, afterwards called Cambridge. They applied to the followers of Robinson, at New Plymouth, for information respecting their church order and discipline, and while they resolved to carry out the Puritan model of a Religious Commonwealth, they agreed to found their churches upon the principle of independency advocated by Robinson. They did not go to New England as “Separatists from the Church of England,” “but we go to practise the positive part of church reformation, and to propagate the gospel in America.”

Although Robinson had been induced to concede more than his original principles entirely justified, with reference to the power of the state over churches, it is important to recognize the distinction between pure Independency on the principles of Ainsworth and Robinson, and what is termed the New England model of Independency, which was a compromise between Independency and Presbyterianism.

The legitimate influence of the little church of the Pilgrim Fathers, was nearly lost in consequence of the vast Puritan emigration which took place. It was at Boston that the celebrated law, which embodied the principles of

* “Via Media, the Way of Peace,” by J. H. of Worcester. Dedication to the King.

New England theocracy, was enacted. On May 18th, 1631, it was resolved by the General Court at Boston, that "for the future no one shall be admitted to the freedom of this body politic, unless he be a member of some church within the limits of the same." It is important to notice, that in this enactment we have a Theocratic State Church erected by the Puritan party. It is an error to confound the New England theocracy with the followers of Robinson and the ancient Separatist Church.*

We have before alluded to Robinson's controversy with Smyth, in which he was led into some dangerous admissions with regard to the right of civil rulers to interfere with religious matters for the good of the churches. These principles were reiterated in the articles sent from the Church of Leyden for the satisfaction of the Virginia company,† and they now bore their fruits in the acquiescence of the Plymouth church with the principles of the New England theocracy. This may be seen by their enactment that the ministers were not to be supported by the voluntary contributions of the members, but by "all who are instructed in the word," and also in "ruling elders" being acknowledged by the Boston and Salem churches, while in the Plymouth only "teaching elders" were acknowledged. It was not lawful for the magistrates "to compel their subjects to become church members," but if they were not so, they had *no vote* in the government of the State. The State was thus to become a community of believers.

* See "Cambridge Platform," 1648. "The term 'Independent' we approve not," although they admitted that the state of the members of the visible church was "congregational," their churches were not in several respects purely "independent" churches. This is reprinted in "Uhlen's New England Theocracy."

† See "Waddington's Congregational History," p. 207.

The State was the executioner of the Church. Heresy, if combined with the seduction of others, was punishable with death; while those who "refused to submit to the will of the well grounded churches, and to their christian reproof and discipline," were to be "cut off by banishment."

Owing to the troubles in the early part of the reign of Charles I., and the disinclination of the Parliament and of Cromwell to interfere with it, this extraordinary experiment was carried out without interruption sufficiently long to manifest its necessary results.

The policy of Elizabeth and the folly of James I. had begun the Revolution. Charles I. reaped the harvest which had been sown by his predecessors. Still, had the object of Charles been to precipitate the catastrophe, the course which he took with reference to both civil and religious matters, in the existing state of public feeling, could hardly have been more accurately adapted to his purpose. This is indeed admitted by his apologist, Clarendon. It is beyond our province to enter into the details of the religious, much less those of the civil history of the time. We shall however strive to realize the inevitable effect of the great events of the time upon the development of the ideas, the rise of which we have been endeavouring to trace. One of the first acts of the Parliament shows the alarm felt in reference to the increase of Popery. The Queen had brought with her from France a long train of Romish priests. "Her conscience was directed by her confessor, assisted by the Pope's nuncio and a secret cabal of priests and jesuits."* The Parliament petitioned for the execution of the laws against Papists. The King promised to comply with their wishes, and secretly connived

* "Neal," vol. i. p. 496, Toulmin's Ed. 1837.

at the laws being rendered inoperative. The English fleet was placed in the hands of the French admiral for the purpose of blockading the harbour of Rochelle, the stronghold of the Protestants. Cardinal Richelieu had formed the design of extirpating the Protestants of France, and was besieging Rochelle. The English sailors had refused to serve, declaring that they would rather be hanged upon the top of the masts than fight against the Protestants.* Laud succeeded to the archbishopric on the 4th August, 1633, but he had virtually the direction of affairs from a very early period.

It is difficult for the general reader to understand how the Puritan preachers obtained a hearing, and maintained their hold on the public mind, through these ages of persecution. This had been up to this time accomplished by their becoming chaplains in wealthy families, and some of the most able and popular preachers of the day were thus employed. They catechised the children. They were employed as tutors in families; and thus the high, religious and intellectual character of some of these families was maintained. This also accounts for the influence which the Presbyterian party had among the nobility and gentry at a later period. It was also a common plan to provide lectureships, and the idle and incompetent clergy of the day allowed the Puritans to preach as lecturers, in the Geneva cloak, without hindrance.

Laud saw that the strength of the Puritan party lay in the existence of these irregular preachers, and issued instructions for the suppression of them, and forbade all under the rank of noblemen to keep a chaplain. The invocation of saints, prayers for the dead, auricular

* "Neal," vol. i., pp. 502, 503.

confession, the doctrine of the real presence, were now advocated by Laud's party. Vast sums were spent in the adornment of churches. The parishioners were obliged to repair to their parish churches, and what were deemed popish decorations and alterations were introduced. Crucifixes were set up over the altar. The communion table was placed altar-wise, and fenced. Pictures and statues, new rites and gaudy vestments rapidly came in upon the astonished country. The opinion which the Pope held of Laud's Protestantism, is sufficient to excuse a protestant writer from entering into the question of Laud's real object, since, on the very day of Archbishop Abbot's death, a cardinal's hat was offered him, which, after consulting with the King, he refused. The question of the propriety of Laud's conduct, is one which a member of the Church of England will answer precisely in accordance with his own views. If Scripture, and the practice of the Apostles were to be the rule, the Puritans and Separatists were right; if Catholic antiquity, Laud. No one can reasonably doubt the inexpediency and folly of his church action, but he consistently carried out his views, and at last fell a victim to his principles. In 1633, the "Book of Sports" was again printed with the King's sanction, and clergymen were silenced for not reading it. Some clergymen read it, and immediately afterwards the 4th commandment, calling on the people to compare the two and judge accordingly.* The feelings of the nation were outraged, and when a parliament was called, the book was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. In 1630, Dr. Alexander Leighton, a Scotch divine, and father of the celebrated Archbishop Leighton, received the sentence of the Star

* "Marsden's Early Puritans," p. 398.

Chamber, for writing a book called “Sion’s Plea against the Prelacy,” to prove “that the Lord Bishops and their appurtenances” were intruders upon “the privileges of Christ, and the King and Commonwealth.”

Ludlow says, “His ears were cut, his nose slit, his face branded with burning irons with the letters S. S. signifying sower of sedition. He was tied to a post and whipped with a treble cord, so that every lash brought away the flesh.’ When this sentence was pronounced on Leighton, “Laud pulled off his cap, and holding up his hands, gave thanks to God who had given him victory over all his enemies.” The Church now not only grasped at all spiritual jurisdiction, but the Bishop of London, Dr. Juxon, was declared Lord High Treasurer of England, the highest office of profit and power in the kingdom.

While these things were being transacted, it is well for us to recollect, that on the Continent the struggle of the great leader of the Protestants, Gustavus Adolphus, with Wallenstein, the champion of the Catholic party, was proceeding; and that the death of Gustavus on the field of Lutzen, in 1632, must have added to the excited feelings of the Protestants in England. In 1633, Prynne, Burton and Bastwick, had been imprisoned, and they rendered themselves obnoxious to the hierarchy by writing pamphlets in their imprisonment. They were tried together in the Star Chamber, in 1637, and were sentenced to be degraded from their profession of Law, Divinity and Physic;—Burton and Bastwick to lose their ears, each to be fined £5,000, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment;—Prynne, who had already lost his ears, to have the stumps cut off, and to be branded with irons, S. L. for seditious libeller; and all to stand in the pillory. The scene of the execution of their sentence was made an ovation by the people; their path to the

pillory was strewn with sweet herbs, the crowd saluted them with enthusiasm, and in their progress through the country to their prison, they were received as martyrs to the cause of religious liberty. In 1637, Laud stirred up Charles to the attempt to impose on the Scots a liturgy. They had been previously exasperated by the introduction of a Court of High Commission. Bishops, and some ceremonies very distasteful to the Scots, had been imposed. Some years prior to this, in 1617, James I., accompanied by Laud, had visited Scotland in order to carry out his intention of imposing episcopacy on the Scotch. Carlyle, in his "Life of Cromwell," introduces this characteristic sketch of the impressions which Laud received in Scotland. "In Scotland, Dr. Laud, much to his regret, found *no religion at all*; no surplices, no altars in the east end, or anywhere, no bowing, no responding, not the smallest regularity of fuglemanship, or devotional drill exercise; in short, 'no religion at all that I could see.'"^{*} On Sunday, the 23rd of July, 1637, the new Scotch Liturgy was read for the first time, and the well-known anecdote of Jenny Geddes, who hurled a stool at the Bishop in St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh, illustrates in a lively manner the difference between the feelings of Dr. Laud, as above quoted, with reference to a liturgical worship, and those of the extreme Presbyterian party. We may, from this incident, gather an idea of the intense earnestness of the times, and when we recollect, that, to use the words of Hume, "the whole tyranny of the Inquisition was introduced by the bishops in England," we shall believe that the feelings of the Puritans, Separatists and Baptists in England, were not less fervent against Prelacy. In 1638, the whole

* Carlyle, "Life of Cromwell," p. 76.

Scotch nation took the Solemn League and Covenant, and prepared to resist the King by force of arms. In England, the Puritans emigrated to Holland and New England in large numbers, to escape from the hands of Laud and the Star Chamber. Scotland was now at open war, and in April, 1640, a parliament was summoned. Queen Henrietta issued a proclamation in her own name, inviting Roman Catholics in the North to contribute money in aid of the war against Scotland. No wonder then that the Commons refused the King subsidies for a war, which they deemed the cause of Popery against Presbyterianism. The Convocation, notwithstanding the temper of the nation, continued to sit, and besides framing new Canons, imposed on the clergy what is called "the Etcetera Oath," containing the clause "Nor will I ever give my consent to alter the government of this Church by archbishops, deans, and archdeacons, etcetera." An armed force was needed to protect its sittings, and an attack was made upon Laud's palace at Lambeth, by above 500 persons. Two thousand "sectaries" entered St. Paul's, where the High Commission sat, and tore down the benches and cried "No Bishops, no High Commission." *

* A curious scene occurred in Norwich, on 22nd February, 1641: "The cathedral blades" put themselves into a posture of defence, because they imagined that the apprentices of Norwich would have pulled down their *organ*." They had musqueteers, "500 persons armed with swords and pistols, to be upon the bratts if any should come against their pipes." It turned out to be a false alarm. . . . "Thus, good reader, thou mayest see how these men are rocked and lulled asleep by this musick!" The writer admits that one of the "constant hearers of this musical masse saith he finds comfort from it; how will he do when it be put down?"—"True News from Norwich," London, 1641. 47, x p 17, Brit. Museum.

CHAPTER VIII.

MEETING OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT. EJECTION OF THE ROYALIST CLERGY. THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY. THE PURITANS ENDEAVOUR TO FORCE THE GENEVA MODEL OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT ON THE COUNTRY. "LAY" PREACHING. WOMEN PREACH. THE INDEPENDENTS AND BAPTISTS OPPOSE THE PRESBYTERIAN SCHEME. DENNE, LAMB, AND OTHERS, PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE COMMON PEOPLE.

ON November 3rd, 1640, the Long Parliament met. Three days had not passed before they resolved themselves into a Committee on Religion. "Almost every parish had a grievance, and within a few days the table of the House was loaded with petitions."* One, called the "Root and Branch petition," was signed by 15,000 citizens of London, and prayed that the government of Bishops, "with all its dependencies, roots and branches, may be abolished, and all in their behalf made void, and the government according to God's word rightly placed." There were besides petitions for the abolition of Episcopacy,—counter petitions in favor of it, but qualified by admission of the corruption of the Church, and thanking parliament for the check which had been given to innovations and abuses. The Parliament devised two measures, which were to be carried out by this committee. First, an enquiry into the fitness and morals of the clergy. Second, an Assembly of Divines to advise

* "Marsden's Later Puritans," p. 44.

upon the future constitution of the Church. During the whole of the war, the Committee on Religion continued sitting. At length few adherents of the Royal cause, and very few of the *Laudian* clergy remained. "The Committee of Scandalous Ministers," one of the sub-divisions of the Committee, ejected 1,000 of the clergy before the war was over. The number of 2,000 to 2,500 of the clergy has been mentioned as a fair and moderate estimate, but we cannot but believe that there has been a tendency among non-conformist writers to under-estimate the number of the ejected Episcopalian clergy, and perhaps their sufferings. (The quotation we give at the foot of this page, appears to us to throw considerable light on this disputed question.)* One fifth of the incomes of the sequestered livings was reserved for the ejected ministers. "The benefices of England were now

* Attached to a proclamation of his excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax (King's Pamph., B.M. 325, 42 o cat.) in 1647, it is stated that, "whereas it appears, upon sufficient proof, that many violent tumults and outrages are committed by several persons (these were Anglican clergymen) against divers ministers placed by order, or ordinance of Parliament, in sequestered livings, and for such their violent carriage to and detaining from the said ministers their profits, there is pretended by the said parties, power and authority from the general and the army, &c. They be brought to condign punishment." At p. 5 we have "the petition of *many thousands* of the poore sequestered clergie of England and Wales." They state that they have been "for divers years outed of their livelihood and freeholds, contrary to Magna Charta, and other fundamental laws of the land, by the arbitrary power of committees. . . . The most of your petitioners outed for refusing the covenant, or adhering to the King and their religion, established according to their judgment and consciences. Your petitioners, who have lived heretofore in good esteem according to their calling, degree, birth, and education, are reduced to extreme misery and want, with their wives and children; that they must either starve or begge, if some speedy course be not taken for their relief. And whereas those who are put into our places, labour by all means to stir up the people, and to involve this kingdom in a new war, and are generally men ignorant and unable to instruct the people, and many of them are scandalous in their practices, if impartially examined; and divers of them hold three or four of the best benefices, whilst divers other churches are void and without any constant preachers." . . . They ask that Sir Thomas

in the hands of the Puritans.”* This has been pleaded by writers on behalf of the Church of England, as a justification of the measures taken by the Episcopalians at the accession of Charles II., by which, on St. Bartholomew’s day, 2,000 Non-conforming ministers were again ejected. But must we not, in justice, admit that the two cases cannot be compared, since on the outbreak of the war it would have been the height of folly on the part of the Parliament to leave men so completely in the interests of the King and Bishops scattered throughout England?† The King had used the pulpits to preach up

Fairfax will “stay the profits of this harvest; that they have nothing to live upon till next year; many if they could receive this “would presently be gone.” At the same period we find this Ordinance of the House of Commons: “It is lastly ordered and ordained, that if any scandalous or delinquent minister, put out as aforesaid, their aiders or abettors, shall at any time hereafter disturb, molest, or hinder such minister as is put into such church or chapel as aforesaid”—“the penalty to be imprisonment for a month.” In Penn’s letter to Baxter [see Appendix xv. to Penn’s Life, vol. i. of works, folio 1726, p. 175,] there is a passage of some importance, showing that Penn considered, at the accession of Charles II., the whole 9000 ministers as *the greater part of them Presbyterian*. Penn reminds Baxter that he had cried up the Presbyterian ministry of 1655 as “the best in the world,” “and when put close to it, runs off and quits the field, of above 9000 preachers with 1800.” “Were the 1800 the ministry, and not the 9000? and did not these call Oliver ‘Moses,’” &c., asks Penn, and says he is “grieved to mention it,” but is driven to it by Baxter’s extravagant praise of the Presbyterian ministry. The 1800 or 2000 ejected ministers were, it is clear, only a very small portion of the ministry of the Commonwealth. These were undoubtedly the best men among the Presbyterian clergy, and their example a noble one, but they were not, strictly speaking, “*Dissenters*,” since they approved a State Church, and only differed on doctrinal and ceremonial grounds. In the providence of God the 2000 ejected Presbyterian clergymen were thrown among the Independent and Baptist Churches, whom a year previously they would have been ready to imprison or exile, and they were taught by persecution the lesson of religious liberty which they had been so slow to learn.

* “Marsden’s Later Puritans,” p. 45.

† On the other side we find, October 14th, 1642, York, “The Cavaliers threaten our best ministers, that if they preach not as *they will have them*, they will kill them.”—“Nehemiah Wallington’s Journal,” from special passages, No. 10.

the divine right of kings, and they were now turned against him. But the Presbyterian clergy who were ejected on St. Bartholomew's day were men of the very party by whom the Restoration was effected, and justice and good faith on the part of the Royalists demanded their comprehension. The Long Parliament instantly ordered Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, Leighton, Lilburn and Brewer to be released from their prison, and the bells rang as they passed, and the people strewed their path with flowers. The parliament abolished the Star Chamber and Court of High Commission. On the 4th December, the canons of Archbishop Laud were condemned. On the 5th July, 1640, Lord Strafford was impeached, and within a week the tide of public affairs had turned. On the 26th February, 1641, Laud was voted guilty of high treason by the House of Commons and committed to the Tower.

But an event now occurred which roused the apprehensions of the English people to an extent which may be related, but which can hardly be conceived. On October 23rd, 1641, the Irish Insurrection broke out. The Protestants were remorselessly massacred. From forty to fifty thousand men were consigned to deaths, in many cases, accompanied by circumstances too horrible to relate.*

* See the tract of G. Fox, "The Arraignment of Popery," 1669, chap. xxvii.—An abstract of the bloody massacre in Ireland. We give the following title as a specimen of the pamphlets dispersed over the kingdom, and this is far less harrowing in its details and more temperate than the generality: "The Rebels' Turkish tyranny in their march, December 24th, 1641, as it was taken out of a letter sent from Mr. Whitcome, a merchant in Kinsale, to a brother of his here; showing how cruelly they 'put them (the Protestants) to the sword, ravished religious women, and put their children upon red-hot spits before their parents' eyes; throw them into the fire and burn them to ashes, cut off their ears and noses, put out their eyes, cut off their arms and legges, broyle them at the fire, cut out their tongues, and thrust hot iron down their throats, drown them, dash out their brains, and such other cruelty not heard of among Christians."—K. P., 4to (gold No. 37), tract 26. London, 1641.

"When the express that brought the news was read in the House it produced a general silence for a time, all men being struck with horror. When it was told without doors it flew like flashes of lightning, and spread universal terror over the whole kingdom. Every day and almost every hour new messengers arrived, who brought further intelligence of the merciless cruelty of the Papists towards the poor Protestants, whose very name they have threatened to extirpate from the kingdom."* "The Rebels called themselves the Queen's Army, and declared they acted by the King's commission under the Great Seal of Scotland." Baxter tells us that "though the better part of the nation could not believe, yet the credulous, timorous vulgar were many of them ready to believe it."†

"Accustomed," says Hume‡ "in all insurrections, to join the Prelatical party with the Papists, the people immediately supposed this insurrection to be the result of their united counsels." "This filled all England with a fear both of the Irish and of the Papists at home," for they supposed that the priests and the ministers of their religion were the cause. "And when they saw the English Papists join with the King against the Parliament, it was the greatest thing that ever alienated them from the King."§

The taking of the Naseby papers appeared to justify the suspicions of the country. It was found that the King had strictly forbidden the printer to strike off more than forty copies of his proclamation against the Irish Rebels. That in another paper he had erased the word "Rebels" and written with his own hand the word "Irish." All this

* "Neal," ii., p. 95.

† "Baxter's Life," part i., p. 29, Ed. 1696, published by Sylvester.

‡ Hist. vol. vi. 323.

§ "Baxter's Life," part i., p. 29.

appeared to show that he felt but little sympathy with the Irish Protestants.* A letter of Charles I. to the Pope has been lately found in the Vatican, dated October 20th, 1645, which, if not a forgery, justifies the impression produced upon the country, particularly upon strict Protestants such as Puritans and Separatists, that his whole course of conduct contemplated a return to "that state in which he might openly avow himself" a member of the Holy Catholic Church.† The news of the Irish insurrection was intensified a year later, in 1642, by the massacre of the Protestants in France, and Englishmen were not slow in arguing that their turn would shortly come.‡ We believe the depth of the excitement produced throughout England cannot now be adequately conceived, and that the under-current of a fear of everything savouring of popery must be presupposed by the reader, if he would understand the results of the religious excitement which existed during the period, some features of which we are endeavouring to describe. The extreme feeling respecting the actions of the Church of Rome, even up to so late a period as 1659, is vividly illustrated, when we find George Fox telling the council of officers of the army that they had done well, if instead of allowing their power to be used for the purpose of persecution, they had gone to "Spain" and abolished the Inquisition, and to "Rome" and "broke up the bars and gates where all the just blood hath been shed." "You

* "Marsden's Later Puritans," p. 188.

† Ibid. p. 190.

‡ "A Warning Piece for London. The Bloody Massacre of the Protestants in Paris," London, 1642. For "thirty days together" throughout France there was no end of killing, slaying, robbing, and abominable cruelties. "The Butcher's Blessing; or, The Bloody Intentions of Romish Cavaliers against the City of London," by J. Goodwin, London, 1642. Goodwin was an eminent Independent, holding free grace or Arminian views.

had gone," he tells them, "in the cause of God and His truth."* The complete incompatibility of war with the Gospel is so completely set forth by Fox, that it is difficult to reconcile this passage except by the horror felt by him at the cruelties of the Inquisition, and that he contemplated it in the light of a judicial use of the sword.

The celebrated Assembly of Divines commenced its sittings on the 1st July, 1643. This assembly was convened by the Parliament in order to settle a Church Government, "as may be agreeable to God's Holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and other reformed Churches abroad, and the better effecting thereof; and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the Church of England from all false calumnies and aspersions, it was thought fit to call an assembly of learned, godly, and judicious Divines" to consult and advise with the Parliament, and give their counsel concerning such things as might be submitted to them. There were about 170 members, 30 were laymen, members of the two Houses of Parliament. The majority of these divines espoused the opinions which Cartwright represented; they either favoured the Presbyterian discipline, or in process of time were brought over to embrace it. It is most important for us, in the point of view from which we propose to consider the rise of the Free Churches and the Society of Friends, to observe with Baxter "that almost all those afterwards called Presbyterians were before Conformists." "Very few of all that learned and pious synod at Westminster were Nonconformists before." † The Assembly continued to sit till

* Vol. of Tracts, No. 1—57, Devonshire House Library.

† "Life of Baxter," by himself, Sylvester, part i., p. 33.

1649. It was then changed into a committee, which sat weekly for the trial and examination of ministers. One of its first acts was to take the Covenant, and the Parliament enforced it on all persons above the age of eighteen years. This amounted to a pledge of the acceptance of a Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterians, or Puritans, were only a powerful party in the church, and the country was totally unprepared to accept this form of Church government; and although some reform was admitted to be absolutely necessary, this was most unpopular.* There were five Independents in the Assembly—Nye, Simpson, Bridges, Burroughs and Thomas Goodwin. They were styled the dissenting brethren. They had previously tasted of Laud's severities, and had taken refuge in Holland. There can be little doubt that the Assembly Independents were not only “a long way behind many of their party,” † but that their object was to gain a share of the benefices at the disposal

* “Plain Truth without Fear or Flattery; or, A Discovery of the Unlawfulness of the Presbyterian Government, it being inconsistent with the People’s Liberties,” &c., also, “A Vindication of Sir Thomas Fairfax,” by Amon Willber, 1647. “Printed and published for the information, advice, and benefit of the poor, oppressed, betrayed, and almost destroyed Commons of England.” Page 3. “First they do in the protestation, promise, vow, and protest in the presence of the almighty God (whom sure they think is like the God of Baal’s priests, that could neither hear nor see), to maintain and defend with their lives, power, and estates, the true reformed Protestant religion, expressed in the doctrines of the Church of England, against all popery and popish innovations within this realm contrary to the same, &c. Yet they are now setting up, and have set up, as far as in them lyeth, a religion never before heard of within this realm, and *quite contrary to the professed doctrine of the Church of England*, it being wholly opposite to Christ, and a mere popish innovation brought out of Scotland and violently imposed upon us. And thus it comes to pass, by the confederacy of a haughty trayterous party in the Houses of Parliament, of which are the Earls of Manchester and Stamford, Sir Philip Stapleton, Mr. Hollis and others, and *with the proud covetous priests*, for the advancement of their design of usurpation and lordliness over his Majesty and us.”

† “Fletcher’s History of Independency,” vol. iv., p. 35.

of the Committee of the House of Commons for their party, and thus to give up one of the fundamental principles of the exiled Separatist Churches. The means by which this was to be effected, was the construction of a Church system on the scheme of the New England Churches, where, as we have before shown, a fusion had been effected between the Puritan or Presbyterian party in the Church of England, and the Independents, who looked up to John Robinson of Leyden as their guide. This was effected, at a later period, to a very large extent in Lancashire.* The policy of the Assembly Independents was to gain time, and with great address and ability they engaged the Assembly in tedious discussions, while every day their party was gaining strength. On the other hand it is instructive to notice how the Presbyterian divines, men professedly of the highest christian character, called together to advise the Parliament, were really engaged (if Robert Baillie, principal of the University of Glasgow, and one of the commissioners of the Scottish Kirk, is to be trusted) in an attempt to outwit their brethren till their respective partisans in the army—to use Baillie's words—should “much *assist our arguments*” by crushing the men who differed from them, on such questions too as the scriptural sanction of Independency as compared with Presbyterianism! †

It is certain, notwithstanding the high praise which

* See “Halley’s Lancashire Puritanism,” *passim*.

† See Baillie’s “39th Letter to Mr. William Spang.” “Letters,” Ed. 1775. “This (*i.e.*, the question of lay elders) is a point of high consequence, and upon no others we expect so great difficulty, except alone on Independency, wherewith we purpose not to meddle in haste till it please God to advance our army which we expect will much *assist our arguments*.” Letter 40. “It was my advice, which Mr. Henderson presently applauded and gave me thanks for it, to eschew a public rupture with the Independents till we are more able for them. As yet a presbytery to this people (the English) is conceived to be a strange monster.”

Baxter gives the Assembly, that the country became weary of its endless discussions, and it became every day more unpopular. It soon became evident that the Assembly aimed at setting up a spiritual tyranny, as Barrowe had long before prophesied, more intolerant and crushing than even Episcopacy. To see men who had so narrowly escaped from the hand of Laud determined to enact a ruthless uniformity, and mete out to others the same pains and penalties, could not fail to disgust the candid and intelligent of all parties. It has been said that the possession of power was the ruin of the moral strength of the Puritan or Presbyterian party, but this does not adequately describe the case. They appear to have aimed, during the whole of their history, at the religious system of Geneva, and it was this which led to their downfall. They closed the argument with the Assembly Independents, by reminding them that their brethren in New England allowed no such "toleration," * as that which they pleaded for.† If they desired a fusion they must sacrifice their cherished principles. It is wonderful to observe the unmeasured terms in which the Presbyterian or Puritan party spoke of "toleration." It was

* It must be borne in mind that this "toleration" was not synonymous with "religious liberty." See an able pamphlet by E. B. Underhill, Esq.—The "Independents *not* the first assertors of the principle of full liberty of conscience, with special reference to the views of the five dissenting brethren in the Westminster Assembly of Divines." Leeds and London, 1849. It is quite true that "the Independents" as represented by the "five dissenting brethren" were *not* "the advocates of full liberty of conscience," p. 6.; but it must be borne in mind that the Brownists at that period, though a more obscure portion of the Independent party were not only more numerous, but also the representatives of a purer school of Independency. The Brownist petition to the House of Commons in 1641, quoted at p. 476, shows that this section of the Independents did advocate "full liberty of conscience." The Independent historians, have hitherto been very shy of claiming historical relationship with any but the more respectable Independent churches, and it is curious that this party who went the farthest from the original and present principle of Independency, should receive the most praise.

† "Marsden's Later Puritans," 154.

denounced by the Synod of Divines at Sion College, in 1645, “as a root of gall and bitterness both in present and future ages.” The ministers of Lancashire declared that it was the “taking away of all conscience ;” “it was the appointing a city of refuge in men’s consciences for the devil to fly to.”* Calamy (October, 1644) told the House of Commons in his sermon, “If you do not labour according to your duty and power, to suppress the errors and heresies that are spread in the kingdom, all those errors are your errors, and those heresies are your heresies ; they are your sins, and God calls for a parliamentary repentance from you for them this day.” † Baxter’s “judgment” was that unlimited toleration “was to be abhorred.” Edwards, the author of “Gangrœna,” whom we shall presently quote, writes with unmeasured language. His book bears internal evidence of the approval of many of his Presbyterian brethren. “A toleration is the grand design of the devil —it is the most transcendant catholic and fundamental evil for this kingdom,—as original sin is the most fundamental sin ;” so a toleration hath all errors in it, and all evils—it is against the whole stream and current of scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, —this is Abaddon, Apollyon, the destroyer of all religion, the abomination of desolation and astonishment, the liberty of perdition—all the devils in hell, and their instruments, being at work to promote a toleration.” He gives us valuable information on this point, that in 1645, “there have been more books written, sermons preached, words spoken, besides plottings and actings for a toleration, within these four last years, than for all other things. Every day now brings forth books for a toleration. The devil for some thousands of years has not found out *this* engine, nor made

* “Neal,” ii., p. 382.

† “Crosby,” i., p. 176.

use of it to support his kingdom!"* Milton tells us† that the most part "of the Assembly were such as had preached and cried down with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of bishops and prelates. That one cure of souls was a full employment for one spiritual pastor, how able soever, if not a charge rather above human strength. Yet these conscientious men (ere any part of the work done for which they came together, and that on the public salary), wanted not boldness to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted reformation, to seize into their hands, or not unwillingly to accept (besides one, sometimes two or more of the best livings),‡ collegiate masterships in the universities, rich lectures in the city, setting sail to all winds that might blow gain into their covetous bosoms. And yet the main doctrine for which they took such pay, and insisted upon, with more vehemence than gospel, was but to tell us in effect that their doctrine was worth nothing, and the spiritual power of their ministry less available than bodily compulsion." He says that they were found "under subtle hypocrisy to have preached their own follies, *most of them not the gospel,*" (being) time servers, covetous, illiterate persecutors, not lovers of truth, *like in most things whereof they accused their predecessors.* The people being kept warm awhile by their counterfeit zeal, being

* "Gangrœna," Book I., part iii., pp. 121, 122, Ed. 1646.

† "History of Britain," pp. 238, 239, Bohn's Ed., 1670.

‡ "An Inspection for Spiritual Improvement," being presented to a Presbyterian Pluralist and Formalist, by Thomas Tookey, M.A., Substitute-Pastor at Thornhaw in Northamptonshire. London, 1646. Mr. Tookey declares that Mr. John Yaxley exacted "the worldly sweet of two distinct congregations." "The sun in its meridian altitude of rigid episcopacy never saw the like." Mr. Yaxley had "peeped into much logic . . . so that tho' once he could not," now "he can account both non-residency and sacred thievery dearly lawful, gainful, hopeful, and needful."

"fouly scandalized," "became cold," "some turning to lewdness, some to flat atheism." Baxter says, "the divines thus congregated were men of eminent learning, godliness, ministerial abilities and fidelity." "The christian world, since the days of the Apostles, never had a synod of more excellent divines than this and the synod of Dort." Milton's testimony has been rejected by some writers of the highest character for impartiality, *e.g.*, Orme* and Marsden,† that he wrote under the influence of personal pique, because the Assembly censured his "Doctrine of Divorce," and it is said that in that pamphlet he addressed them as "select assembly," &c. Fletcher clearly points out that the quotations relied upon by these writers *do not*, when considered in their proper connexion, imply "Milton's approval" of the Assembly of Divines."‡ There were those then living who could have amply refuted Milton's statements, and Baxter cannot be deemed an impartial witness. He says, "When the Quakers and others did openly reproach the ministry, and the souldiers favored them, I drew up a petition for the ministry, and got many thousand names to it."§ (Baxter was therefore a thorough-going supporter of the Assembly and the Presbyterian ministry, and yet, even he remarked|| of the Assembly men, that "they frightened the sectaries into this fury by the unpeaceableness

* "Orme's Life of Baxter," chap. iv., p. 69.

† "Marsden's Later Puritans," pp. 92, 93.

‡ It was written in 1643, soon after the Assembly met, and we have in this harsh judgment upon Milton's motives, an instance of the exceedingly slender grounds on which the testimony of a man who had the best opportunities of forming an opinion, is challenged. It seems impossible to conceive a man like Milton, harbouring a private pique to the extent of traducing the character of the Assembly, 25 years afterwards. (The "History of Britain" being written in 1670.) "Fletcher's History of Independency," vol. iv., p. 21.

§ "Baxter's Life," Sylvester, p. 70.

|| Autobiography, p. 103.

and impatience of their minds, and they were so little sensible of their own infirmity, that they would not have those tolerated who were *not only tolerable but worthy instruments and members in the churches,*" that those who "pleaded for charity" could never be heard.)

The Assembly of Divines, and the Presbyterian clergy must be tried by their fruits. Some of these were good, but there is another and darker side to the picture which we conceive has hardly been sufficiently dwelt upon.* On the 3rd of January, 1645, the Parliament issued an ordinance to abolish the Common Prayer Book in public worship, and for the imposition of the Directory.† The clergy

* "The Clergy in their Colors, or, The Pride and Avarice of the Presbyterian Clergy hindering Reformation; showing how from time to time they have been the fomentors of this first and second war; but, also by their horrid fallacies, have to this present deluded the Commonwealth—discovered in a plain and familiar dialogue between Philalethes and Presbyter." (London, 1651.) (The MSS. of this was written some years before.) Page 41. "Take but a view of their practices, and let that speak how well they have carried themselves within five years past, since they got their preferments. I could instance in many places where superstitious and blind bussards were put out of their livings, and some of them orthodox men put in their roomes, and when they had got good livings, were they, or are they contented? Some hold livings in the country, and some in London, hardly ever coming to the flock but to take the fleece. Some hold two or three livings apiece; some leave one and run to another when they can find a greater, nay, they will fight for a better living rather than lose it;) and yet falsely bewitch the silly people to believe that it is the call of God so to do, when it is nothing else but the delusion of Satan, and of their own wicked hearts to satisfy their ambition and avarice. See but how these men press the committee for plundered ministers, for augmentations and removals from day to day, and how they engage Parliament men to act for them, calling themselves in their certificates and petitions 'godly,' 'learned,' and 'orthodox divines.' And it is observed in the county that many of those who are thus put in, prove more proud, covetous, and contentious, than those that were put out."

† There is a pamphlet in the British Museum ("King's Pamphlets," E 183, Tract 10, 1644) entitled, "MSS. Proposition by the Committee for the County of Kent, to the Hon^{ble}. House of Commons, in behalf of said County." They recommend that "Such as forsake their own parish churches where a pious and painful (Presbyterian) ministry is settled by a parliamentary authority, and do usually repair to other

were commanded to conform to it under heavy fines. It forbade the use of the Book of Common Prayer, even in the domestic circle, under a penalty of five pounds for the first, and one hundred pounds for the third offence.*

The frame of the proposed Presbyterian State Church was this: "Wherever there was an established congregation with a Pastor, whether in a Church to which tythe of common right belonged, or one in which a vicar was established, or a mere Chapel to which no tythe belonged, persons called "Ruling Elders" were to be chosen by the votes of the congregations, whose duty it was to assist the pastor or minister by their information, advice, and service, and to exercise a superintendence over all the other persons composing the congregation. These formed the congregational Eldership. The minister, and some of the more discreet of the Ruling Elders, in districts containing some twenty or thirty congregations, were to meet once a month as a "Classical Presbytery." The number of elders sent by

parish churches not far distant, where these other lazy, superstitious usages are continued, that the said committee, or any twelve or more of them, may be authorized by ordinance of Parliament, or by order of this honourable House, to punish by way of fine, all such persons whose estates are not sequestered," and in case of non-payment their estates to be sequestered. Note in MSS.: "All was received with much thankfulness, but Mr. Dashwood durst not license it in print!"

* " Since it has pleased our wise and newborn state,
The Common Prayer Book to excommunicate;
To turn it out of act, as if it were
Some grand malignant, or some cavalier;
Since in our churches 'tis by them forbid
To say such prayers as our fathers did,
So that God's house must now be called no more
The house of prayer so ever called before."

"To a virtuous and judicious lady who (for the exercise of her devotion) built a closet wherein to secure the most sacred book of prayer, from the view and violence of the enemies thereof," &c. Brit. Museum, fol. sheets, King's Pamphlets.

each congregation not to be more than four, or less than two. One of the ministers was to act as a moderator or chairman. They might redress any abuse of any kind that could be construed into an offence against ecclesiastical discipline. They were the examiners of persons who were candidates for the ministry, and with them it lay to give or refuse ordination. An appeal however lay from them to the "Provincial Assembly," which was to meet twice a year, and to consist of two ministers and four ruling elders, sent from each "Classical Presbytery" in the province. Above all, there was to be a "National Assembly," composed of two ministers and four ruling elders, sent from each "Provincial Assembly," together with five learned and godly persons from each of the *Universities*. This was to be the Court of Final Appeal, but it could only meet when summoned by Parliament. It was part of the duty of the congregational or Ruling Eldership, to enquire into the religious knowledge and spiritual estate of any member of the congregation, and to admonish, suspend from the Lord's table, and even to excommunicate those whom they deemed ignorant or scandalous." *

(On the 26th of April, 1645, an ordinance of Parliament was issued for the "silencing of all such preachers as were not ordained or allowed" by those who shall be appointed thereunto by both Houses of Parliament. A still more stringent ordinance was passed to the same effect, on December 26th, 1646. All preaching or exposition of Scripture was forbidden, and all who "spoke aught in derogation of the Church government then established." England, which had broken in pieces the yoke of Prelacy, was now expected meekly to place her neck in this new

* "Hunter's Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 55.

yoke of the Puritan clergy; but there were some of her stout hearted children who were determined not to lose that liberty of conscience, which they valued more than life. That excellent man, Richard Baxter and his friends, had in the end to feel that after all, the despised "sectaries" were men of clearer vision than himself and his party.) We will now quote a Baptist view of the Assembly. A work came out in 1647, by Samuel Richardson.* Its title is, the "Necessity of Toleration in matters of Religion," addressed to the Assembly of Divines, with the significant text "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ," &c. "Ye suffer fools gladly."

"When Romish tyranny hath the upper hand,
Darkness of mind and superstition stand."

He gives to the Assembly, "The Nonconformists' answer why they cannot submit to the aforesaid Faith," p. 279. "It was not studied out of the Word of God, but they had borrowed us a religion out of Scotland." Third—"We have had very much experience of you to be the greatest time-servers among men, and even to turn with the wind, for when the cross, surplice, and mass-book were urged, you yielded to them, and swore canonical obedience to the bishops, your fathers," &c. Because the tide is turned, ye are turned. Fourth—"If you had truth on your side, and the Spirit of God to direct you, you might have, with ease and speed, given sufficient answer to the questions the Parliament gave you to answer." Ninth.—"Neither are they any of the true ministers of Jesus Christ unless the Pope be a true minister of Christ, because their ministry

* Reprinted in "Tracts on Liberty of Conscience"—Hansard Knolly's Society. He was probably a pastor of the Baptist branch of that Church in connection with Mr. Spilsby (and his name is attached to a confession of faith put forth in 1643, 1644, and 1646.

came from him, as appears by ‘Mason’s Book of Ordination,’ and ‘Yates’ Model of Divinity, and yourselves confess.’” He tells them that their priesthood is false and antichristian; that the church of which they are ministers is no church of Christ. He ends: “Mr. Presbyter, your principles are large and dangerous. Who can tell what you will judge tolerable? Such as cannot dance after your pipe, and rule in your way, you judge heretics, and they must appear before your dreadful tribunal to receive your reproof, which is sharp and terrible, and strikes at our liberties, estates and lives—you still want to use a sword; who sees not that, if you had it, you would have wounded yourselves and others—and we had as good be under the Pope as under your Presbyterian check.”

The battle of Marston Moor, on July 2nd, 1644, and the battle of Naseby, on June 14th, 1645, struck the last blow in the struggle between Charles and the Parliament, and all fear of the return of Episcopacy was at an end. Laud had fallen a victim to the Puritan party, on January 10th, 1644. A purely religious movement had been steadily progressing amid the stirring events of the time. The Independents and Baptists were rapidly forming Churches. Nothing was more common than for an Independent to get into a living, and while conforming to the Directory, he set up an Independent Church. The Cathedral of Exeter was divided into two parts—for Presbyterian and Independent worship.* The Baptists appear in 1653 to have set up a church in St. Paul’s.†

* “Pope’s Life of Ward,” pp. 55, 56.

† “The Madman’s Plea; or, A Sober Defence of Captain Chillington’s Church:” showing the destruction and derision ready to fall on all the baptized Churches not baptized with fire. London, 1653. Page 6. “Is it not ridiculous for Anabaptists to build a Church at Paul’s (in the highest place of the city) when Paul never owned a church of Anabaptists or Dippers.”

There were a class of Independents, and at a later period, during Cromwell's protectorate, a class of Baptists, who did not scruple to receive the State pay. On the other hand, there was another class who entirely rejected it. These men were engaged in preaching the Gospel to the masses, and forming Churches. Their aims were purely religious, they had no selfish ends to gain, and they are therefore entitled to credit for sincerity. Not only did they denounce the State maintenance, but the Separatists objected to "ministers receiving maintenance from all sorts of people in their parishes, without difference," and it was called in one of their pamphlets, "an execrable sacrilege, and covetous making merchandise of the things of God—a letting of themselves out to hire to the profane, for filthy lucre."* Christians alone should support their pastors, and it manifestly tended to the corruption of the Christian religion, if its ministers are made to depend for support upon even the *free contributions of wicked men*. Dr. Stoughton remarks† that "two classes of Independents are distinctly visible," at a period earlier than that of which we are speaking.‡ The character of their preaching was entirely different from the elaborate,

* "Hanbury," vol ii. p. 279.

† "Church of Civil Wars," vol. i., pp. 366, 367.

‡ In "The Anabaptists' Catechism, with all their practices, meetings, and exercises, the names of their pastors, their doctrines, disciples; a catalogue of such dishes they usually make choice of at their feasts (*i.e.*, love feasts usually held at an inn) how and by whom they are dipped, &c., published according to the order of their conventicles," printed for R. A. 1645," we have curious evidence of the less political character of certain Baptists, and that certain Independents were not deemed "Independents" *at all*, because they had apostatized from their original principles. "Question—What is the main thing that you and the Independents differ in? Answer—We differ very much from them, for though *you call them Independents* (a name too honourable for them yet), *they are none*, for they allow of black coats (*i.e.*, state ministers), and profane learning and superstitious preaching in *pulpits*, and many such things the Independents approve of, but *we do not allow of these things*." They are made to say, "*We are free from blood, and will not kill.*"

doctrinal treatises of the Presbyterian clergy. To use the words of Edwards, the author of "Gangroena," it was "in a kind of strain which takes with the people much." This movement was characterized by a purely lay ministry, and its rapid progress may be clearly traced in the satirical pamphlets of the time. A great controversy arose on the propriety of such a ministry; * a controversy in which the opponents of the practice used as their best weapons, bitter and unsparing satire, and we gain from them many important facts which might otherwise have escaped notice. We will take a peep at what is called "the Brownist Synagogue," found in a tract entitled "The Brownist Synagogue, or a late discovery of their conventicles, assemblies, and places of meeting; when they preach, and their manner, with a relation of the names, places and doctrines of those who do commonly preach, the chief of which are Green, the feltmaker, Marlin, the buttonmaker, Spencer, the coachman (see note at foot), Rodgers, the glover, which sect is much increased of late in the city—a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." Page 2.—"Let me, gentle reader, not be prolixious, and I shall relate unto thee the names and places where these illiterate preachers live, and make their assemblies, and the unlearned doctrines they hold. The first man that I begin with shall be an irreverend glover whose name is Richard Rodgers; he ofttimes doth call a congregation, and at his own house tells them what they shall do. The Spirit, he tells them, moves him, and so proceeding, he tells them what

* This is commenced in 1640 or 1641, when the operation of Sectaries attracted notice, e.g., "A short treatise concerning lawfulness of every man exercising his gift as God shall call him unto," by John Spencer. We conclude this was "Spencer, the coachman," mentioned farther on. This was published in 1641.

first comes into his mind ; his apologie is that he speaks nothing but that which the Spirit gives him utterance for. John Bennet, he disalloweth of human learning, his reason is that some of Christ's apostles were fishermen when he called them. Charles Thomas, a Welchman, doth teach in Warwick Lane once a fortnight, as he holds none lawful to be amongst the prophets, but those who were inspired by the Spirit, so no man is fit for their holy service but *devout* men, and who is familiar with the Spirit. Alexander Smith, whose opinion is that no man ought to teach but as the Spirit moves, and for this one reason we may set ourselves against those scholars, as bishops, deans, and deacons, which strive to construe the Scripture according to the translation of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, which last language stinkes (*i.e.*, because of its association with popery) like a piece of bife a twelvemonth old, yet unsalted." This amusing caricature from the pen of an adversary, enables us still further to trace some of the opinions of the Amsterdam churches up to the time of George Fox. The account of the way in which these persecuted, despised christian people held their worship, may well touch our best feelings as christian men. "They do not all come together, but come two or three in a company. Any man may be admitted thither, and, all being gathered, the man appointed to teach stands up in the midst of the room, and his audience gather about him. He prays about the space of half-an-hour, and part of his prayer is that 'those who come hither to scoff and laugh, God would be pleased to turn their hearts ;' 'by which means,' says the hard-hearted narrator, 'they think to escape undiscovered.' His sermon is about the space of an hour, and then another stands up to make the text more plain."

On September 8th, 1641, it was ordered by the House of

Commons, "that it shall be lawful for the parishioners of any parish within the kingdom of England and Wales, to set up a lecture, and to maintain an orthodox minister at their own charge, to preach every Lord's-day when there is no preaching, and to preach one day a week when there is no lecture."* This led to the Independents and Baptists availing themselves of any opportunity which might occur to supply a deficiency.† We meet again with "Marlin, the buttonmaker," at St. Ann's Church, Aldersgate, on the Sabbath-day, August 8th, 1641. The minister being absent, "many desired their friends to go into the pulpit," and a contest arose whether a stranger who was "once a Jesuit," should preach, or Mr. Marlin. It appears that Mr. Marlin obtained the consent and ear of the people, and preached a lengthy, sound, protestant sermon. At last, however, the churchwardens interrupted him, and pulled him down from the pulpit.‡ In the same year, "prophet Hunt preached in St. Sepulchre's Church, "making another combustion."§ The connection between this movement and the Amsterdam Churches can be clearly traced.|| The ancient Church in Southwark, formed in 1616 by Henry Jacob, was still in

* Brit. Museum, "King's Pamphlets," # 28, 172.

† "The Mystical Wolfe," London, Feb. 3rd, 1644, p. 6, "with illuminated Anabaptists who blaspheme the baptism of children, and these heretics, who in times past we burned, we may hear now *in our pulpits seducing the people.*"

‡ "A True Narrative of a Combustion happening in St. Anne's Church, Aldersgate," &c. 1641, Brit. Museum.

§ Probably "James Hunt, the farmer" (see "A Curb for Sectaries," London, 1641).

|| See "The Anatomy of the Separatists, alias Brownists, with the strange hubbub, and formerly unheard of hurly-burly which those phanatick and fantastic Separatists made on Sunday afternoon, 8th May, in the Parish of St. Olave's, in the Old Jewry, at the sermon of the Rt. Rev. Father in God, Henry, Bishop Chichester," London, 1642. "Many places in England and London are too much *Amsterdamnified*. Religion is become common table-talk. Papists, Atheists, Brownists, Anabaptists, Familists, and the Sisters of the Fraternity, all will have their way. Page 2—The Fraternity at

vigorous operation; John Lothrop succeeded Jacob, he emigrated to America, and the celebrated John Canne was pastor for a short time; Henry Jessey, his successor in 1637, was sent by his congregation to preach in Wales, in 1639. Samuel How succeeded, or was co-pastor with him, and was joined in the pastorate by Stephen More. This congregation, which had subsisted for over twenty years, shifting from place to place to avoid persecution, opened their doors to the public on January 18th, 1640-41. We find a description in verse, of the celebrated Samuel How, the learned cobbler's preaching, probably, on this occasion:

" And at the 'Nag's Head,' near to Coleman Street,
 A most pure crew of Brethren there did meet,
 When their devotion was so strong and ample
 To turn a sinful Tavern to a Temple.
 * * * * * * *
 A worthy brother gave the text, and then
 The Cobbler How his preaching strait began,
 Extrem'ry, without any meditation,
 But only by the Spirit's revelation;
 He went through stitch, now hither and now thither,
 And took great pains to draw both ends together;
 For (like a man inspired from Amsterdam),
 He scorned *ne sutor ultra crepidam*;
 His text he elouted, and his sermon welted;
 His audience with devotion nearly melted." *

Amsterdam, and the Brownists in town, are *brethren of the same tribe*. They hold that religion ought to be guided by the motion of the Spirit, not reason. They despise all learning. Page 4—They hold it lawful for artificers and laymen to preach in publick, as cobblers, weavers, leathersellers, boxmakers, ironmongers, feltmakers, and such like mechanick fellows. They make no reckoning of a church more than a stable. Page 6—They cried, 100 or more, 'A pope! a pope!' when the Right Reverend Bishop came into the pulpit."—Brit. Museum, large 4to 1—14.

* Stated to be about 100. A swarne of Sectaries and Schismatiques, wherein is discovered the strange preaching (or prating) of such as are by their trades cobblers, tinkers, pedlars," &c., with portrait of Samuel How in his tub, preaching to a conventicle, date probably 1641, p. 9.

Ellwood quotes Howe's "Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching," in "Forgery no Christianity." The kind of treatment to which these good men were subjected, may be illustrated by a quotation from "A Discovery of a Swarmer of Separatists, or A Leather Seller's Sermon, describing how Burboon (or Barbon), a Leatherseller, had a Conventicle of Brownists, &c., with another relation," &c.*—"Many of the Brownists crawled over the tiles and houses, escaping some one way, and some another. But at length they catched one of them alone. But they kicked him so vehemently as if they meant to beat him into a jelly. It is ambiguous if they have killed him or no, but certainly they did knock him as if they meant to pull him to pieces. I confess it had been no matter if they had beaten their whole tribe in the like manner." This Mr. Barbon was pastor of one section of this Ancient Separatist Church, when they divided equally in May, 1640, and one part remained with Mr. Henry Jessy, and the other with Mr. Praise God Barbon.† Barbon, as "an elder, governed the Church in Leyden, which held communion with Robinson's Church at that place." ‡

The preaching of women appears to have commenced among some of the Independent Churches about this period (1641) in England.§ It seems probable that this

* Brit. Museum, E No. 36.180.25.

† Hanbury's "Historical Research concerning the most Ancient Congregational Church in England," pp. 10 and 16, London, 1820.

‡ "The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared," by John Cotton, of Boston, p. 16, London, 1648.

§ In America it appears to have existed among the Baptists about 1636. "The third dividing tenet by which these persons propagated their errors, was between the Word of God and the Spirit of God. And here these sectaries (*i.e.*, the Baptists) had many pretty knacks to delude with all, and especially to please the female sex. They told of rare revelations of the things to come from the Spirit, as they say, 'Come

practice originated in certain Baptist churches in Holland.* Baillie, in his "Anabaptism the True Foundation of Independency, Brownism, Familism, Antinomiy," &c., London, 1646, p. 30, says, "the continental Baptists allowed women's preaching,† and every one of their members the power of

along with me,' says one, 'I will bring you *a woman that preaches better Gospel than any of your black coats* that have been at the University,' a woman of another kind of spirit who hath many revelations of things to come, and for my part, saith he, I had rather hear such an one that speaks from the mere motion of the Spirit, than any of your learned scholars, although they may be fuller of the Scripture, and admit they speak by the help of the Spirit, yet the other goes far beyond them."—"Johnson's History," pp. 67 to 99, quoted in "Backus' History of New England."—Keith says, that "these called Presbyterians (in England) may remember how they have both allowed and countenanced *women* both to pray and speak of their experiences in their private meetings, and yet they cannot deny but their private meetings are a Church."—"The Woman Preacher of Samaria," 1674.

* "The Brownists' Conventicle," &c., 1641, p. 13.—"And in this our thanksgiving let us remember all the blessed pastors and professors, whether at Amsterdam or elsewhere; as also for our *she*-fellow labourers, our holy and good blessed women who are not only able to talk on any text, but search into the deep sense of the Scripture, and preach both in their families and elsewhere." Also "Lucifer's Lackey, or, The Devil's New Creation," London, 1641, speaks of a congregation in the malt-house of one Job, a brewer, the numbers being about seven score persons, and says,

"When *women preach* and cobblers pray,
The fiends in Hell make holiday."

We have also notices of this practice in "Idolater's Ruin and England's Triumph, or the Meditations of a Maimed Soldier," January 17th, 1644, London, p. 1.—"Wherefore let Priscilla and Aquilla be Paul's helpers, and let every one as he hath received the gift, minister the same one to another, and let us prophesie one by one," &c. In "Tub Preachers Overturned, or, Independency to be Abandoned and Abhorred," a reply to a letter to Thomas Edwards, London, 1647, we have a description of a woman preacher in rhyme:—

"And that her zeal, piety, and knowledge,
Surpassed the gravest student in the college
Who strive their human learning to advance;
She with her Bible and a concordance
Could preach nine times a week morning and night,
Such revelation had she from New Light!"

In Cotton's church in New England, Mrs. Hutchinson, a woman of great parts, preached, although not in the public assembly.

† Women preached among the Baptists at Strasburg.

public preaching, and also the power of questioning the preacher on doctrine "before the Church," and that in England it was the same, but that "many more of their women do venture to preach among the Baptists than among the Brownists, in England." Mrs. Attaway, "the mistress of all the she-preachers in Coleman Street," was a disciple in Lamb's congregation. He states that he believes the "feminine preachers in Kent, Norfolk, and the rest of the shires" had "their breeding in the same school," which appears to show that they were dispersed as travelling preachers. This seems to identify the preaching of women with the principal General Baptist Church in London, but it does not appear to have been confined to the General Baptists.* As late as 1653 we find a lady preaching in the "Queen's Mass Chapel at Somerset House," and who preached elsewhere.†

The ordinance of Parliament to silence every preacher who was "not ordained a minister in this or some other

* "The Schismatics Sifted, or The Picture of the Independants." London, 1646. Page 34.—"Is it a miracle or wonder to see saucie boyes, bold botching taylors, and other most audacious, illiterate mechanicks to run out of their shops into a pulpit? To see *bold, impudent, huswifes* to take upon them to prate an hour or more; but when I say is the extraordinary spirit poured upon them?"—"A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering Blazing Stars and Firebrands styling themselves 'New Lights,'" by William Prynne, Esq. London, 1645. Page 47.—"Whether Independents admitting women not only to vote as members, but sometimes to preach, expound, speak publicly as preachers in their conventicles, be not directly contrary to the Apostles' doctrine and practice, and a mere politick invention to engage that sex to their party? He says also in preface, that the Independents give women not only 'decisive votes, but liberty of preaching and prophesying,' speaking in *their congregations*."

† "State Papers Uncalendered," 813 A, paper No. 77. 25th July, 1653. "Theodoras," to the Right Hon. Lord Conway. "Here is start [i.e., started] up an audacious virago (or feminine tub preacher) who last Sunday held forth about two hours together within our late Queen's mass chapel at Somerset House, in the Strand, and has done so there and elsewhere, divers Sabbath-days of late, who claps her Bible and *thumps the pulpit cushion* with almost as much confidence (I should have said impudence) as honest Hugh Peters himself!"

Reformed Church, except such as intending the ministry were *allowed* for the trial of their gifts by those who shall be appointed thereto by both Houses of Parliament," was enacted on 26th April, 1645. It was intended by the extreme Presbyterian party to arrest the progress of Independency. Not only throughout the whole army, but throughout the whole country, the practice of lay preaching was spreading. The Independents argued that there were "a large number of persons not ordained, who had scrupled ordination under the former bishops," and also scrupled "the present form of ordination, and they forbore until church matters should be fully settled;" and that Parliament never intended to silence them, and they contended that such persons may preach," provided that they do it at such seasons as hinders not the public preaching, and in such a manner as disturbs not the public peace."* This ordinance was "sent to Sir Thomas Fairfax to be observed by the army," and all military personages, and this tract is addressed to "gentlemen of the soldiery in the field." It appears that in the army little attention was paid to the ordinance. They "sent out everywhere captains and soldiers" to preach, and gave "tickets of the time and place" in true military fashion.+ It was declared by the

* "The Clear Sense, or a Vindication of the late Ordinance of Parliament," &c., pp. 1, 2, 3.

+ William Prynne, Esq.—"Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandering Blazing Stars and Firebrands, styling themselves New Lights." London, 1645. Preface. Prynne tells a story which illustrates a general feeling of Englishmen about the soldiers' preaching—"Quoth the Scotchmen, 'Man, is it fit that Colonel Cromwell's soouldiers should preach in their quarters *to take away the ministers' function?*' Quoth the Englishman, 'Truly I remember they made a gallant sermon at Marston Moor near York. That was one of the best sermons that hath been preached in the kingdom.'—We find also that Oliver Cromwell's porter preached on a grass-plot opposite his house. Women were observed turning to their Bibles, and "did sigh and groan, and showed as strong motions of devotion as could be seen in any Quakers' meeting!"

Independents, &c., to be a “monopoly of the Spirit worse than the monopoly of soap!” “About the beginning of the year 1653,” we find that “the opinions that were rampant in the army *infected also the country.*”* The great point of difference between the Independent and Presbyterian parties in Lancashire, was on the question of the preaching of “gifted brethren,” *i.e.*, lay preachers. Even in this part of the country, where the fusion† was more complete between the Independents and Presbyterians, the Presbyterians were compelled to allow (if they did not approve) the occasional preaching of “gifted brethren” in the pulpits of the churches.‡

Baxter informs us that the Separatists said “let the

* “Martindale’s Life,” p. 110.

† On Mr. Eaton’s New England scheme of accommodation.

‡ Two or three “ruling elders” of Mr. Eaton’s Independent Church “preached frequently at Tabley Chapell in my parish,” Martindale tells us. In 1659, this question between the Independents and Presbyterians was set at rest, by the concession of the point of the liberty of unordained persons, not intending the ministry, to preach, with this proviso, that no persons should preach in the churches except they were approved by the ministers or preaching officers, and that the congregations were not to be “disturbed” by having unordained preachers “imposed upon them,” and also that every effort was to be used, that “no offence be given by the preaching of mere gifted brethren.” Martindale’s Life,” p. 12, Cheetham Society, 1845. See also “Newcome’s Autobiography,” Cheetham Society, vol. xxv., p. 36. Mr. Stringer, the regular Presbyterian minister at Macclesfield, invites Mr. Eaton to preach and bring some one with him to supply for both parts of the day. Mr. Eaton then writes stating that some of the people of Macclesfield had solicited their ruling elder, Mr. Barret, to preach there. To this Mr. Stringer consents, and invites the said lay preacher to occupy his pulpit in conjunction with Eaton, the Independent minister. Newcome “declares his dislike,” but not a word is said about its *legality*, or being *contrary to church regulation*. Barret was a sequestrator, and some of the aldermen “took it so ill that he should preach in their pulpit.” It is certain, however, that the connection between the Presbyterians and the Independents tended to reduce or stifle lay preaching. Saltmarsh says, in 1649, “Stop not the breathings of God in mean private christians; the counsels of God flow *there*, and when the greater persons sometimes for His glory are left naked without a word of advice from Him.” “I found this desolating evil beginning in your (*i.e.*, the Independents) meetings.”—“England’s Friend,” London, 1649.

Lord be glorified, let the gospel be propagated," and that "there were few of the Anabaptists who had not been the opposers and troublers of the faithful ministers of the land (*i.e.*, those of the Presbyterian party)."^{*} In Edwards' "Gangrœna," published in 1645, abundant evidence is given of the vigorous operation of these Independent and Baptist churches. He states (part i.) that the sectaries are "much stunned" with the vote passed in Parliament against lay preaching. He is furious at the idea "of mechanics, as smiths, taylors, shoemakers, pedlars, weavers, taking upon themselves to preach. By this ordinance it was said that "Sir John Presbyter's gums" were "to be rubbed with a parliament *coral* (baby's coral), and that now he was mad to put his boarish tusks, his huge iron fangs, in execution, to devour, rend, and crush these hereticks!"[†] In a word, this vote excited a strong opposition, and became a dead letter.

Mr. Henry Denne[‡] was a graduate of the University of Cambridge, and ordained in 1630, but having denounced the vices of the clergy in a visitation sermon in 1641, he is found in 1643 a member of Lamb's church in Coleman Street. He was a most excellent christian man, and being sent forth by Lamb's Church into Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, and those parts, comes in as a celebrated General Baptist, for Edwards' reprobation. He is denounced as a great antinomian (which is untrue) and a desperate Arminian. He preaches much against tythes, whereby he draws the people after him. He hath put

* "Baxter's Life," p. 102. Autobiography.

† W. Prynne, Esq., "Fresh Discovery," &c., London, 1645, preface.

‡ Denne fell into the snare which was laid for George Fox, and became a captain in Cromwell's army. He was implicated in the revolt of the "Levellers," condemned to death, but pardoned by Cromwell, who knew his excellent character.

down all singing of psalms in his Church. He preacheth and prays, and after he hath done he calls to know if any be not satisfied, and then they stand up that will, and object, and he answers them. Others of the brethren that will, with mechanicks one or two more, sometimes do exercise after him. There is also one Tandy, or Dandy,* who comes sometimes to Elsby and preaches there and about that country, who tells them of revelations and miracles, and saith revelations are ordinary to him.

A large amount of mis-representation must be allowed for by the reader, and if he charitably supposes that there were some of these men whose heads were turned by the fervid religious excitement of the times, we must at the same time admit the existence of the same excitement in the narrator; each party looking at the deeds of the other through coloured glasses. There are touches of nature and truth about some of Edwards' descriptions, which may well reach our hearts, as we view, unwarped by prejudice, the earnest christian labours of the truly godly men who preached the gospel to the masses of the people, not for pay or worldly honour, but in obedience to their Master's command. "This Mr. Denne hath some kind of strain in his preaching which *affects* and *takes the people* much, as for instance he will say, "Oh, Lord Christ, if thou wert now on earth and didst reveal the gospel to men, they would call *Thee*, 'Anabaptist, Antinomian, Independent,' who now call us so." "He would have preached about spring last on a lecture day at St. Ive's, but the committee gave orders against it, and not being suffered, he went to a churchyard not far off that place, and under

* Philip Tandy, a minister of the Church of England, who became a Baptist (seventh day) "a person of great abilities and piety." "Brook's Puritans," vol. iii., p. 30.

a yew tree he preached, many following him, pronouncing many fearful woes against them for not receiving the gospel. "Mr. Disbrough*" says of him, that he is the ablest man in England for prayer, expounding and preaching. The usual theme he is upon is Christ's dying for all men, Judas as well as Peter." "He often preached this doctrine." "This is the everlasting gospel, to believe that Jesus Christ died for all men." "Men were only damned for not believing Christ and nothing else." This Mr. Denne delivered his opinions in such a manner as if he had been an apostle sent from heaven."

Here we trace the operation of the General Baptists, and in clear connection with a Church in London formed by Thomas Lamb, and meeting at Bell Alley, Coleman Street.† Lamb was seized prior to this at Colchester for preaching in a Separatist congregation, and dragged before the Star Chamber. He was undaunted in the work of the gospel, till he had made the acquaintance of nearly every

* Mr. James Disbrowe was Lord of the Manor of Eltisby and an elder of the Fenstanton Church. His brother was a major-general in Cromwell's army, belonged to Cromwell's council, one of his generals at sea, also one of the lords of the Cinqueports; his salary was £3,236 per annum. "Narrative of the late Parliament," 1658. In the Swarthmore papers we find what is probably a notice of the same person. "A. Parker to George Fox," 1657. "Went to a place beyond Cambridge, where never a meeting had been; the man's name that did desire the meeting was one Disborrow, an ancient professor. He is *uncle* to Major-General Disborrow. There was a very large meeting both of Friends and others, and we both had a large time to declare the truth without interruption. When we had done a Baptist teacher stood up and spoke some words, but was soon silent. There was also another of their teachers, and some others that we had some words with, but they had very little to say against what was declared." Probably Parker was mistaken, or Noble, in his History of the Protectorate House of Commons, is wrong. If they are two distinct persons, this would be the father of Mr. James Disborrow, the friend and patron of Denne, and the elder in the Fenstanton General Baptist Church; but this is improbable, and we have here another instance of the friendly relations between the General Baptists and the followers of Fox.

† Taylor, "History General Baptists," p. 99.

prison in London. He frequently observed "that a man was not fit to preach who would not preach for God's sake, though he was sure to die for it as soon as he had finished." We can clearly see here the stamp of men, who, although everywhere spoken against, had the spirit of the Apostles and Martyrs, and were doing the real evangelistic work of the times. Henry Denne wrote a tract in 1646, entitled, "The Drag Net of the Kingdom of Heaven, or Christ Drawing all Men."* This tract contains (p. 91) a passage which places the doctrine of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the heart of the believer in precisely the same point of view, and in the same words, as Fox did in commencing his preaching two years later. He quotes John i. 9—"Now God is light, and God is a spirit. If then Christ lighteth every man, God lighteth every man. The Spirit lighteth every man that cometh into the world. What is it for man to be lighted, but for the light of the glory of God, shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ, to shine in *darkness*? For every man to be lighted is (as I conceive) for the manifestation of the glory of God to be showed forth in some measure to them." It is a curious fact, that Denne wrote to defend the Quakers from the foolish imputation of being Papists in disguise.† "George Whitehead is not a Papist, according to that Bedlam fancy which Baxter is daily sowing." It appears that not only Whitehead, but the "Bedfordshire Tinker," Bunyan, had an encounter with Thomas Smith, Bachelor of Divinity, and lecturer at Christ Church, Cambridge, who appears to have excused himself

* Brit. Museum.

† "The Quakers no Papists," &c., a reply to Mr. Thomas Smith, B.D., lecturer in Christ Church, Cambridge; his frivolous relation of a dispute between himself and certain Quakers at Cambridge, 1659.

for coming off with little credit, by his being taken at unawares, while “he was turning over some Arabic MSS.,” which Denne thinks a very curious excuse for so learned a man in an encounter with “a tinker and a Quaker.” “While,” says Denne, “he labours to prove the poor Quakers to be introducers of heresies, he himself introduces a most damnable one, denying the ubiquity of the three Persons of the Trinity! You seem to be arguing with the tinker (Bunyan) because he strives to mend souls as well as kettles!” In reply, it was suggested that Bunyan mended souls just as he mended kettles—“stopping one hole and making many!” Henry Denne’s “friends the Quakers, did not only challenge Mr. Smith and all the Presbyterian clergy in England in print,”* “but set up bills in defiance at the commencement, upon the school (college) doors!” They hoped Denne would “stable none of his troop horses in heaven, though they *come into* (St.) *Paul’s!*” The Quakers were asked “if they did not esteem their speakings to be of as great authority as any *chapter* in the Bible?” and some one answered wittily (if not wisely), “Yes, of *greater!*”† This was sufficient to supply the material for a wonderful amount of misrepresentation, although Whitehead distinctly denies that it was spoken by a Quaker. Whitehead, on that occasion, defined the “immediate inspiration” needful for a Christian minister, not as anything equivalent to, or superseding the New Testament Scriptures, but merely that it was “that inspiration which giveth *the understanding in things which are spiritual.*”‡

* This alludes to “Fox’s Mystery,” fol., p. 19, preface.

† “A Gagg for Quakers, with an Answer to Mr. Denne’s ‘Quaker no Papist,’ London, 1659, pp. 1, 3.—The Bible was divided into *Chapters* in the 13th century, by Cardinal Hugo de S. Caro. Coverdale followed this division. The Geneva version (1560) was the first English Bible with our present *verses*.

‡ “The Key of Knowledge, *not* found in the University Library, Cambridge.” 2nd Ed., 1660.

The dispute between Whitehead and Smith took place in "the Quakers' common meeting house," and one of the people *drew his sword* in the course of the discussion, to add weight to his argument.*

The parliamentary army had in its ranks the most godly among the Sectaries and Puritans. Wherever the King's army bent its course, private houses were plundered. Excellent and pious men, whatever sentiments they happened to profess, were abused by the King's soldiery, and found refuge in the army of the Commonwealth. Chillingworth says, "I observed a great deal of piety in the commander and soldiers of the Parliament's army. I confess their discourse and behaviour do speak them Christians, but I can find little of God or godliness in our men." Lord Clarendon says, the Commonwealth army was an "army whose sobriety and manner, whose courage and success, made it famous and terrible all over the world;" while the King's army was "a dissolute, undisciplined, wicked, beaten army, whose horse their friends feared, being terrible only in plunder, and resolute only in running away." The leisure hours of the soldiery were spent in reading their Bibles, in singing psalms, and in religious

* It is asserted that Smith obtained the living at Caldicut under very disgraceful circumstances. The parishioners were greatly opposed to Smith, but Smith's friend, Mr. Bayly, of Bamwell, pretended that Smith had some other living in view, and then got them to give Smith a general testimonial of "ability," &c. This was used against the parishioners. It secured Smith the living against the wishes of the parish. We mention this as an instance of the stamp of "learned divines" who were denounced by the early Friends. Smith charged the Quakers with having been instigated by the devil, to "torment, bewitch, and destroy, as his, and their greatest enemy, Mr. Tyford, late minister of Sherborne, a learned, pious, and orthodox divine, being tormented with a painful sharp disease, of which he died," and even his successor was forced to desert the town by their witchcraft! (Preface to "A Gagg for the Quakers.")

meetings, conferences, public disputes, &c.* Wherever they came, property and virtue were secure. Their zeal, however, went beyond all bounds in the destruction of church property, and the "idol temples" fared ill at their hands,

* A curious specimen of the spirit of the camp is preserved in the British Museum, "King's Pamphlets," folio sheets, entitled, "A Spiritual Song of Comfort, or Encouragement to the Souldiers that are gone forth in the Cause of Christ," headed with engraved busts of the Earls of Essex and Warwick, Sir W. Waller and Mr. Pym. To every line of this hymn there is a text of Scripture quoted. We have only room for the following specimen:—

Cant. iii. 8, 7	Come along my valiant souldiers,
Gen. xxxv. 3	Let us goe into the field;
Heb. ii. 10	O let us march after our captains,
Phil. i. 28	Unto our foes let us not yield.
Deut. xx. 1	Although our enemies be many,
Judg. ii. 34	And though they do us sore annoy,
2 Chron. xiv. 11	Hosts of men they are as nothing,
Deut. xxxi. 3	Jehovah can them all destroy.
Ezek. xviii. 35	We have a cause that's just and equal,
" xxxi. 20	Our adversaries' is not right;
Deut. xxxii. 30	Therefore one shall chase a thousand,
Joshua xliii. 10	We shall put them all to flight.
Psalm cxvii. 5	Though we be hungry, cold and weary,
2 Cor. iv. 16	And almost ready for to starve,
Gen. xvii. 1	We have an all sufficient Captain,
2 Col. i. 10, 11	From them all can us preserve.
* * * * *	
Joel ii. 1	Therefore strike up the drum's alarm;
1 Cor. xiv. 8	Let not the trumpet cease to sound;
Isai. xxix. 9	Behold how Babel it doth stagger,
Rev. xviii. 4	Methinks it doth begin to fall;
" xix. 11	The white horse rider and his army
" xix. 14	Will dash their bones against the wall.
" xix. 19	Though here the beast and the false prophet <small>(probably Episcopacy and Presbyterianism)</small>
Psalm xxvii. 10	A little while do seem to thrive,
Rev. xix. 20	Yet shortly shall they both be taken,
" xix. 21	And into the lake be cast alive;
" xix. 3	Therefore let us all sing Hallelujah
" xix. 4	Both now and also evermore;
" vi. 10	Because he hath our blood avenged,
" xix. 2	And judged the scarlet-coloured whore.

Printed in the year antichrist is falling.

many monuments of religion and antiquity being ruthlessly destroyed.* This, however, was sanctioned by Act of Parliament. Baxter lived for some time in the army, and gives a testimony to the general soundness of their christian character, and even of their doctrinal views.† The more spiritually minded christian men among the Puritans, were now rapidly passing over to the Independents and Baptists, and the formation of Independent Churches, is one of the great features of this period. To give an idea of the astonishment, as well as alarm, which this movement excited, first among the old fashioned Church party, and next among the Presbyterians, we will give a few extracts in illustration. An anonymous Church-writer says, “they (the sects—Independents, Baptists, &c.,) take the liberty to separate themselves from the clergie, and by mutual call of one another, to *jugge* themselves, like partridges, into small *coveys*, which they call ‘bodies’ or ‘churches,’ even before they have any minister, whom they resolve to have of their own choosing and ordering, that they may be sure to have him after their humour ! ” “The better to set off their opinions and practices, their retreat is (*as foxes when eagerly hunted*) to earth themselves in *this*—the Spirit hath

* The injuries done to Churches was not entirely the work of the Roundheads, e.g., “The malicious and malignant party, the Cavaliers, in Cornwall,” “doth hourly mischief in those parts without remorse or pity nay, the very churches they make stables of. Is not this barbarous ? ” “Nehemiah Wallington’s Historical Notices,” vol ii., London, 1870, p. 124. The whole of this work abounds with proof of the spoiling of “Books of Law, Records and Monuments,” 130, and the wanton destruction of books and every description of property by the *cavalier* soldiery.

† As a specimen of the style of a soldier’s sermon, we venture to insert the text of one in the British Museum, thus—“Orders given out, the Word, ‘Stand Fast,’ ” as it was lately delivered in a farewell sermon by Major-General Samuel Kem, to the officers and soldiers of his regiment in Bristol, Nov. 8th, 1646. Page 4.—“Stand fast ! that’s the word. Faith in the heart, not the head, is the signal. Labour to have a stubborn and stout will in relation to what is known to be the truth of God,” &c.

taught and dictated those things to them, or interpreted or revealed the Scripture to them in this manner ; or impelled or driven them to such ways as are uncomely or unwonted.”* Edwards writes, “ Independents and Brownists were formerly against Anabaptists and Arminians, Familists, Antinomians ; but now, all the Independents in England say not a word against them, but side with them and stand up for them.” In his celebrated “ *Gangrœna*,” he is almost furious in his denunciations of the sects now starting up on every side. In his first treatise he gives a catalogue of what he calls 176 errors, heresies, and blasphemies. In the second he gives us twenty-three new ones, and we have additional heresies presented to our view in the third part of this work published in 1646. It must be remembered that this extraordinary work of this Presbyterian minister, must have been written in 1644 and 1645—that is, four years before G. Fox began to preach.

Although Edwards’ “ *Gangrœna* ” is one of the most intemperate books ever written, yet we must recollect he was furnished with material by such men as Baxter, and his book gives a vivid picture of the mind of the nation breaking loose from its fetters, and daring to think for itself on religious matters. It is curious to notice how many of the errors, heresies, and blasphemies catalogued by Edwards, are now accepted by all as profound and unquestionable truths. There is abundance of evidence that many of the ideas which have been too often tacitly assumed to be solely the offspring of “ Quakerism,” were held at this period (before George Fox commenced his public career as a preacher) among the Independents and Baptists.

* “A Brief Description of the Religion and Manners of Phanatiques in General,” p. 10. London, 1660. Brit. Museum.

We have already traced the origin of the doctrinal and practical principles with which the first Independent and Baptist Churches commenced their religious career, and we shall therefore readily understand that a great variety, both of opinions and practices, prevailed amongst them at this period. Edwards says that "there are some *Independent* preachers who will neither baptize children, nor administer the *Lord's Supper*."^{*} "It was maintained," he tells us, "that singing David's psalms is blasphemy and telling lies; that all set times of private prayers are unlawful and superstitious." A lieutenant in the army, and a great sectary, affirmed to Edwards' informant, respecting the means of God's revealing his mind and will to his servants in reference to their salvation, that "God did it immediately by himself without Scripture, without ordinances, ministers, or any other means."[†]

Many notices of persons are given who affirmed that the Scriptures were "not the Word of God," and quoted John i. 1, and "told us he knew no 'Word but that.'" "One Kendal preached against human learning, as being 'flesh,' and that universities were of the devil." "Mr. Baseley

* "Gangroena," part iii., p. 89. See also "A Discovery of the most Dangerous and Damnable Tenets that have been spread within these few years, by many Erroneous and Heretical and Mechanic Spirits." Prop. 29.—"That John's baptism, which was of water, did end at the coming of Christ."

Also in New England about 1636, there were Separatists (Baptists) who entirely disused baptism and the Lord's Supper. "And here they played their game to purpose—even casting down all ordinances as carnal, and that because they were polluted by the ordinance of man, as some of these sectaries have said to the ministers of Christ—you have cast off the cross in baptism, and you would do well to *cast off baptism itself*. As also for the *sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, for to make use of bread, or the juice of a silly grape to represent the body and blood of Christ, they accounted it as bad a *necromancy* in ministers of Christ to perform it." "Johnson's History, pp. 67 to 99, quoted in "Backus' History of New England," p. 79.

† "Gangroena," part ii. p. 6.

opposed his doctrine in the afternoon, and this Kendall stood up in the church and opposed him, but was hindered by a justice of the peace." * "A quartermaster belonging to a regiment of horse, said, he 'had a command from the Spirit to preach,—the Spirit without learning enables a man to the work.' There were some women-preachers who kept constant lectures, preaching weekly to many men and women." † A young woman sixteen years of age is mentioned, "who preached to many young men and maidens." "Mr. Walwin (what religion he is of no one can tell) asserts Marshall, Calamy, Sedgwick, to be a company of mountebanks; he knew no scripture for them to be preachers more than other men, as shoemakers, cobblers, weavers, sope-boylers, and the like. If these tythes were taken from them, they (*i.e.*, the Presbyterian ministers) would leave their trade." Then we have a great sectary preaching against tythes. ‡ There are abundant evidences of the rising tide of feeling against the Presbyterian ministers. "A soldier laid his hand on his sword and said, 'This sword shall never be laid down while there is a priest in England.'" But Edwards' work shows plainly the nature of the movement, in his hue and cry about the lay preachers of the Independent and Baptist churches. Edwards preached in church against mechanic preachers, and one stamped with his foot and said, "this rascally rogue deserves to be pulled out of the pulpit;" and half-a-dozen men said, "let us go and pull him out of the pulpit." § "A young man in scarlet spoke to Edwards as he came out of the pulpit at Christ Church, and told him that if the soldiers may not have leave to preach, they

* "Gangroena," part iii., p. 80.

† Ibid. part i., p. 84.

‡ Ibid. part iii., p. 98.

§ Ibid. part i., p. 108.

will not fight," as these men, both commanders and troopers, are the men God has blessed so within these few months, to rout the enemy in the field, &c.* On the 1st November, 1646, Colonel Hewson came into Aston Church with his soldiers, contemned the ordinance of Parliament read that day against lay preaching, and did preach, whether the minister would or no.†

The spiritual evils which afflicted the country were not the result of this outburst of lay-preaching. Errors and heresies only assumed an importance, because the forcible suppression of the utterances of the human mind had left it utterly untrained, and a prey to the violent passions which the attempt to subjugate it had engendered. The words of the poet seem written in characters which he that runs may read, on the stormy history of the period—

“Tyrants, in vain ye trace the magic ring;
In vain ye limit minds unwearied spring.”

To curb the elements is not to apply them to their proper uses. An honest soldier of the period tells us truly, when he says, “Many thousand souls besides me, can testify that Christ hath been preached, and that effectually, and to the comfort of many hearts; and I bid defiance to the devil and all his black-mouthed instruments to produce, that even those who they call sectaries, in the preaching of the Lord Jesus, did by that, even open a gap to profaneness.” † We find abundant evidence that the troubles of the civil war now gave an opportunity for thousands of christian laymen to go about doing good, and to strive to save souls.

* “Gangrena,” part i., p. 111.

† Baillie mentions a soldier preaching in two churches on “Anabaptism,” &c., p. 297, in 1646. “Anabaptism the True Fountain of Independency,” &c. London, 1646.

‡ “Preaching Without Ordination,” &c., by Edward Chillenden, Lieutenant of Horse, 1857.

The head and front of their offending was, that they did it in an “irregular manner,” and without sufficiently consulting the opinions and feelings of the “learned, pious, and orthodox Divines” who then happened to be in power.

Saltmarsh,* in his “Sparkles of Glory, or some Beams of the Morning Star, to the Establishment and great Enlargement of a christian in Spirit and in Truth,” 1647, explains the views then current, in his dedication to the Parliament, and attacks the Presbyterian party for their part in the enacting of the before-mentioned law for the suppression of “unordained” ministry, or “public or private” expounding of the Scriptures. According to their view, “God,” he tells them, “must not speak till man give him leave, not teach, nor preach, but when man *allows*, and *approves*, and *ordains*.” “The infinitely abounding Spirit of God, which blows when and where it listeth, and ministers in Christians according to the gift, and prophesies according to the will of Almighty God, is made subject to the laws and ordinances of men,” as ordination, &c. He presents to the Parliament “some things that I may not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, or *Light of God revealed in me*.” He explains the mystery of the “First Adam and the Second Adam” very much in the same way as Fox at a later period.

* Saltmarsh refused tithes, and restored to the State all the tithes that he had taken. See “Light for Smoak,” &c.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ORIGIN, OPINIONS, AND RAPID SPREAD OF THE "SEEKERS" OR "WAITERS." MILTON'S VIEWS RESPECTING "SECTS" AND "SCHISMS." THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY. THE PURITANS. "THE SCRUPLE SHOP." TRUE CAUSES OF THE OPPOSITION OF THE "SECTARIES" TO THE PRESBYTERIAN PARTY. PROPHECY IS HELD TO BE A MINISTERIAL GIFT. THE "LETTER" AND "THE SPIRIT." BOTH PARTIES PROCEED TO EXTREMES. AN ANGLICAN PROPHET. "MIRACLES" AND "GIFTS OF HEALING." RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT PRODUCES RELIGIOUS INSANITY.

EDWARDS tells us that the sect of "Seekers greatly increased at this period, Independents Baptists leaving their congregations; not only the people, but the ministers."

It has sometimes been considered that the Seekers consisted merely of those who were unsettled in their religious views, but it is unquestionable that in the times of the Commonwealth, they had their regular assemblies, constituted according to their peculiar views. The origin of the views of the Seekers, must be sought far earlier than the period of which we are treating.

Bartholomew Legate, whom James I. on February 10th, 1611, "adventured with a good conscience to burn,"* for holding thirteen heretical opinions against the divinity

* Notwithstanding that "some lawyers" were of opinion, that "whatsoever was done in Queen Elizabeth's reign, was done *de facto* and not *de jure*."

of our Lord,* was a man of great ability, and prior to 1608, was a preacher in a congregation, holding the views of the
 ✓ “Seekers” of the Commonwealth, in Zealand in Holland.†

We shall hereafter find the celebrated Galenus Abrahams, of Amsterdam, holding the opinions of the Seekers. It is not impossible that the origin of the Seekers may be traced to the little hidden societies of the “Friends of God,” who will remind us of Tauler and Nicholas of Basle, and carry us to a period prior to the Reformation. Ubbo Philipps, a cotemporary and fellow labourer of Menno, distinctly states that there were societies “who served God in *quiet simplicity*—after the manner of the patriarchs, &c., and who sought God from the heart; served and clave to Him without preachers, teachers, or an outward gathering”—but that some of these “were not satisfied to serve God with such a quiet clean heart,” and, like the Israelites, desired visible gods, and set up a congregation, office, and order, and giving themselves out as sent of God, commenced to baptise, preach, teach, and set up a new church. The names of these seceders, according to Ubbo Philipps, were, viz., Thomas Muntzer, Hubmaier, Rinck, Hut, Denk, Hetzer, who afterwards became Baptists. While it is obvious that the earlier religionists he speaks of, held that the original Church of Christ and His Apostles had been so corrupted and laid waste by Antichrist, that the Apostolic “order,” “mission,” and “teaching,” no longer existed in its original purity, and while having relations with one

* See “Letter from John Chamberlain, Esq., to Sir Dudley Carleton”—Birch’s MSS., 4173. The thirteen heretical opinions may be found in “Truth brought to Light on History of the first Fourteen Years of James II.,” 1692.

† See “Henoch Clapham’s Error on the Right Hand,” &c., 1608. Third, fourth, and fifth dialogues between “Anabaptist,” “Flyer,” “Familist,” and “Legatine Arrian.” There can be no doubt that under this name Clapham intends Legate himself, and the writer admits that the characters represented are *real persons*.

another as simple and spiritually minded Christians, they maintained the attitude of seeking or waiting on God, holding the opinion that no scriptural warrant existed for setting up a visible church.* Whether we have here the origin of the ideas of the "Seekers," or "Waiters" of Commonwealth times, is a question which may be determined by future investigations, but it is certain that the "Seekers" are mentioned by name, as a religious body or party, by Morton, one of the first English Mennonite or General Baptist writers, as early as the year 1617.† Baillie tells us that Spilsby, (one of the same school of Baptists) "acknowledges, that many Baptists become Seekers." He states also that the Seekers did not celebrate Baptism and the Lord's Supper.‡

Saltmarsh gives a clear account of the views of the "Seekers." He says that they "find that the christians of the first or Apostles' time were men visibly and spiritually endowed with power from on high, or with the gifts of the Spirit, and so were able to make clear and evident demonstration of God amongst them, as in the churches of all the christians then in Corinth, Ephesus," &c.; and "that all who administered in any outward office as to spiritual things were visibly gifted." There was *then* an "apostle, evangelist, prophet," &c., &c., and "all administered in the anointing or unction of Spirit, clearly, certainly, infallibly; they ministered as the oracles of God. But now, in this time of the apostacy of the churches, they find no such gifts, and so dare not

* "Ubbo Phillipps Bekentnitz," &c., written before his death in 1568, and reprinted in "Jehring's Gründliche Historie," &c., p. 29. Jena, 1720.

† See pp. 410, 411. Note pp. 412, 413.

‡ Saltmarsh, whose views were closely connected with those of the Seekers, denies that under the Gospel there is any outward baptism, and that any administrators of the ordinances were provided for in the Gospel.—"The Shining of a Flaming Fire in Zion," p. 15 and 3, by Hansard Knollys, London, 1645.

preach, baptise, or teach, &c., or have any church fellowship, because they find no attainment yet in any churches, or church ways, or administration of ordinances, according to the pattern of the New Testament, &c., &c. Therefore they *wait* in this time of the apostacy of the church; they *wait*, only in prayer and conference." They wait for an apostle, or angel, able in the Spirit to give some visible demonstration of their sending, &c.* This was thought by them to be an "upper room," a higher administration "than Presbytery, Independency, Baptism;" that gathering into that way was saying, "Lo! Christ is here," and going after the lo! heres and lo! theres. It is obvious that among the "Seekers" there was a strong mystical tendency. Cromwell, in his letter to his daughter, Bridget Ireton, written in 1646, tells her that her sister Claypole is "exercised with some perplexed thoughts to be a Seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder." William Penn, in his preface to Fox's Journal, tells us

* They held that "God would shortly raise up apostles with visible infallible gifts to preach the Gospel," and that it is "the will of God that miracles should attend the ministry as in primitive times"—"A Relation of Several Heresies," &c., p. 15, 1646. Both the General Baptists and the Friends argued with the Seekers, that there was "the presence of an apostolical power now among us directing and authorising men in the gathering of churches," &c. "The ministry of the apostles is now among us to direct and authorize what is to be done in the christian life in matters of worship, ordinances, and the like."—See "A Doubt Resolved, or Satisfaction for the Seekers," &c., by William Allen, pp. 23 and 28 (he was a General Baptist, see p. 327 "Hansard Knollys Society Confessions of Faith). This throws considerable light on Fox's statement that he and his helpers were in the spirit and power of the *Apostles*. We therefore see that this is not a claiming of Apostolic inspiration, but speaks of a vital distinction of church officers. The Independents (see note, p. 104) denied that *apostles* and *evangelists* now existed, but had ceased, and therefore no such church officers could be maintained in church government. The General Baptists and the Society of Friends maintained that the necessity for such officers had *not* ceased, and asked for proof of such a general evangelizing mission to all Churches having ceased, which was not easy to give. The question of the authority of scripture did not enter into the discussion.

that the Seekers, "or the Family of Love," as they "were called by some,* sometimes met together, not formally to pray or preach, at appointed times and places, not in their own wills as in times past they were accustomed to do, but waited together in silence, and as anything arose in one of their minds that they thought favoured with a divine spring, so they sometimes spoke." (John Jackson, one of the Seekers, gives the following explanation of the views and practices of the middle or more moderate class of Seekers.† Firstly, they seek the mind of God in the Scriptures. Secondly, they judge that prayer and alms are to be attended to, and for this purpose they come together "into some place on the First-days as their hearts are drawn forth and opportunity offers." They then seek "firstly, that they may be instruments in the hand of the Lord to stir up the grace of God in one another, by mutual conference and communication of experience." Secondly, to wait for a further revelation. Thirdly, to hold out their "testimony against the false, and for the pure ordinance of ministry and worship." *They behave themselves as persons who have neither "the power nor the gift to go before one another by way of eminency, or authority, but as sheep unfolded, and as souldiers unrallied, waiting for a time of gathering," &c. They acknowledge "no other visible teacher but the Word and works of God, on whom they wait, for the grace which is to be brought at the revelation

* Penn must have been greatly misinformed here, not only because the principles of the Seekers are not found in the tracts of the Familists, but, as we have seen, the Familists were those who had *found* genuine prophets of a most exalted description.

† "Hosannah to the Son of David," London, 1657. He states (p. 3) that "Satan, on purpose to deceive as much as in him lies the remnant of the seed, has sent abroad certain instruments under great disguises of purity and piety, clothing them with the titles of the *apostles* and *messengers* sent abroad to preach the everlasting Gospel, whose designation among men is that they go under the name of Quakers."

of Jesus Christ." He gives it as his present opinion (which shows that he is diverging from the opinion of the "Seekers"), that people, after they are "espoused by Christ, have a right to choose their own minister, but not before. The power *then* rests in a travelling, Apostolic Ministry. An Apostolic Ministry for begetting a Pastoral Ministry, for feeding" a congregation.)

We shall hereafter describe another class of "Seekers" whose views were closely connected with the "Ranters." The opinions of the Seekers and Ranters seem to have been propagated in the lines of the connection we have been tracing between the Continental and English Baptists. It will be readily seen that the objection of the "Seekers" to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, simply rested upon the idea that no properly authorized *administrators* of these ordinances now existed, and that they were waiting for the gathering of a new christian Church by a divine and miraculous power, and persons properly sent and qualified to administer these ordinances.

Edwards informs us, that among the errors, heresies, and blasphemies of the times, were the following, which appear to be closely connected with the spread of the "Seeker" congregations:—"That to read Scripture to a mixed congregation is dangerous.* That we did look for great matters from One crucified at Jerusalem 1600 years ago; but that does no good, it must be a Christ formed *in us*, —the Deity united to our humanity.† That men ought to preach and exercise their gifts without study and pre-meditation, and not to think of what they are to say till they speak, because it shall be given them in that hour, and the Spirit shall teach them.‡ That there is no need

* Error 10.

† Ibid. 29.

‡ Ibid. 127.

of human learning or reading of authors for preachers, but all books and learning must go down. It comes from *want of the Spirit that men write such great volumes!** That only persons who have an infallible spirit, as the Apostles, should pray.† That christians are not bound to pray constantly every day at set times, as morning and evening, but only at such time that the Spirit moves them to it, and if they find not themselves to be moved in many days and weeks together, they ought not to pray.‡ That parents are not to catechize their little children, nor to set them to read Scripture, or to teach them to pray, but to let them alone for God to teach them.§

Pamphlets and books upon religious subjects, came forth from the press at this time by thousands. The unsettled state of the country, and the contest which was raging between the King and the Parliament, and the advancing power of the Independents in the army and elsewhere, gave a practical freedom of the press, such as had never before existed in England.

Milton's greatest prose production, "Areopagatica," a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing, was published in 1644. He understood the crisis, and saw in it "a noble and puissant nation rousing herself, like a strong man after a sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Me-thinks I see her, as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam, purging and unsealing her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and

* Error 128.

† Ibid. 135.

‡ Ibid. 137.

§ Ibid. 157.

schisms." Was not 'the Christian faith once a schism ?' "Under these fantastic terms of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city." A rigid external formality leads to a 'gross, conforming stupidity.' Men's 'mouths' were to be stopped, 'because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them.' These are not only words of wisdom, but are also words which men even now do not understand. Milton believed "that *truth was strong, next to the Almighty*; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings, to make her victorious." Milton's poem "on the Forcers of Conscience," shows us the views of the early Independents, Baptists, and the founders of the Society of Friends, and of tens of thousands of their fellow-countrymen at this period, respecting the Presbyterians and the Assembly of Divines :—

" Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,
And with stiff vows renounced his liturgy
 To seize the widdowed whore Plurality;
 Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,
 And ride us with a 'classic' hierarchy;
 Taught ye by mere A. S.* and Rutherford,—
 Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
 Must now be named and printed '*heretics*'
 By shallow Edwards and Scotch What-d'ye-call; †
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots, and packing worse than those of Trent.
 That so the Parliament
 May with their wholesome and preventive shears
 Clip your phylacteries, though baulk your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge;
 New presbyter is but old priest writ large."

Describing the state of the country one writer says,—

* Dr. Adam Steuart.

† Robert Baillie.

"Honest industry is quite discouraged, being almost useless ; most men that have estates are betrayed by one side or another, plundered, sequestered. Trading (the life and subsistence of thousands) decaying, eaten up with taxes ; your poor quite ready to famish, or to rise to pull relief from rich men's hands by violence. Squeezed by taxes ; wracked with war ; the anvil indeed of misery, upon which all the strokes of vengeance fall. A woeful nation ! once the finest people in the world, now the veriest slaves—slaves not to *one*, but many masters."*

Many were brought by affliction, by the loss of friends, of relatives, of children, by the loss of their property, and all the chances and changes of a civil war, to seek "a better country." "Content is not here," it was said, "where can we find it ? Like the dove of the deluge, that flew to the ark because nowhere else could it fold its wings to rest, many were taught by trouble to seek rest in Christ."†

We smile when we read of " Seekers," but the very name expresses a great fact in the spiritual history of this nation. In those days men's hearts were stirred to their very depths. Thousands felt that they needed something more than the empty show of religion. They wished to grasp the reality. It is fancied by some, that the mere fashion of the times will account for sermons of two or three hours, and prayers of an hour long being listened to with rapt attention, but it was not so. There is every evidence that the strongest heads believed, and the stoutest hearts were bowed under the conviction, that an offended God was pleading with a nation who had deeply transgressed His holy laws. The splendid imagery of the Jewish prophets and the Book of

* "The Leaves of the Tree of Life," &c., p. 31. W. Sedgwick, 1648.

† "Joseph Alleine : His Companions and Times," by Charles Stanford.

Revelations was applied to the state of the nation, and there were few who did not expect that some extraordinary era was about to commence.*

This is not the language of a sect, or party; it pervades the religious utterances of all truly pious souls, from Bishop Hall to George Fox. What a vivid picture does Bishop Hall give of these times, when he says, “‘Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.’—Isaiah ix. 1. Was there ever a more fearful example of Divine vengeance against any nation, than to be armed against each other to their mutual destruction, that christian, compatriot brethren should pour out each other’s blood like water in our streets, and leave their mangled carcases for compost in our fields,—that fathers and sons should so put off all natural affection as to think it no violation of piety to cut the throats of each other. Oh, that we have lived to see the woful havoc that the hellish fury of war hath made everywhere in this flourishing and populous island,—the flames of hostile fury rising up in our towns and cities, the devastation of our fruitful and pleasant villages, the demolition of our magnificent structures, the spoile and ruine of those fabrics which should be sacred; in a word, this goodly land for a great part of it turned to a very Golgotha and Aceldama. These, these, my brethren, if our eyes be not made of pumices, must needs fetch tears from us, and put us into a constant habit of mourning. Of whom do you think Isaiah speaks when he saith ‘They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way, the priest and the prophet

* The idea of the near approach of a “Fifth Monarchy” was *most widely spread*, and this must not be identified with the opinions of the few crazy enthusiasts called ‘Fifth Monarchy Men.’

have erred through strong drink,' (Indian smoak was not then known) &c.—Isaiah xxviii. 7. Of whom do you think the same Hosea speaks when he says, 'They have spoken words, swearing falsely in *making a covenant*.'—Hosea x. 4. Yet once more do we think of the bold intrusion of presumptuous persons into the sacred calling without any commission from God. Of whom do we think the prophet Jeremy speaks, 'The prophets prophesy lies in my name, I sent them not, neither have I commanded them.'—Jeremiah xiv. 14."*

The very same quotations are made for opposite objects, and it is instructive to see both Bishop Hall and Fox applying the very same texts to the circumstances of the times, and to denounce the drunken parish priest, the Covenanter, and the Puritan intruder into the ministry.

The alarm of the country, respecting the designs of the Romish church, had a depth and reality of which we cannot form the faintest conception. It is not too much to say that this alarm was justified by the events of the time. The Thirty Years War, which had desolated Germany, was now coming to an end from the mutual exhaustion of the combatants. The cause of Protestantism was in no way advanced. Protestants, as well as Catholics, had violated every principle of true religion in the contest. Places, which were once the scenes of civilization and prosperity, were now the haunts of wolves and robbers. The population in South and West Germany was diminished by twenty, and in some cases fifty per cent. It may be reasonably doubted how far the interests of Protestantism (if by this term is meant real religion) were forwarded by the

* "Remaining Works of Bishop Hall," London, 1659. "The Mourner in Zion"—a sermon on Ecclesiastes iii. 4—pp. 158, 148, 160.

tenet of the lawfulness of the use of arms to support its cause. It directly associated the Christian Religion with the idea of worldly power, and by linking the cause of christianity with the fortunes of political parties, it has furnished directly or indirectly the greatest obstacles to its reception.

The aspect of Europe filled every Protestant with apprehension, and this continued over the whole period of which we are treating. The Pope issued a Bull, promising canonization to those Catholics who fell on the side of the King, which was intercepted and sent up to Parliament.* The power of the Papacy as a purely worldly organization was greater than that of a purely political Protestantism. Robbed of its spirituality and earnestness, the power of Protestantism was now greatly diminished. We may recollect that the massacre of the Vaudois, by the Duke of Savoy and the French, took place on the 25th January, 1655.

In England there were among the Puritan or Presbyterian party many enlightened, christian men, whose learning and piety will ever be held in reverence. There were among them many pious and earnest preachers of the Gospel. But we may well doubt whether real religion flourished among them in the hour of their triumph, as it did when they were a down-trodden and persecuted people. There was great need in their religion of that which is "from above," which is not only "first, pure," but also "peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." To use Baxter's words, "the pulpit, instead of being made a means of preaching the Gospel to ignorant, miserable people, they rather disputed with them of formalities and

* Commons' Journals, vol. iii., pp. 257, 264, noted "in Alleine's Life," by C. Stanford.

niceties, when the question presently to be determined is whether they are to live in heaven or hell." Their sermons were doctrinal rather than practical.

What an extraordinary view does it give us of the religious ideas of the seven Puritan divines who were sent by the Parliament, in the beginning of September, 1646, to Oxford, to reconcile the University to the Presbyterian cause, when we contemplate the fact that they set up a Conference, every Thursday, where they undertook to solve "Cases of Conscience." The case was to be propounded a week before, in order that it might be well considered. Can we avoid the conclusion that the religion of these men had something in it of a mechanical kind, when matters, which lay between men and their God, were solved just as we should now lay a case before an eminent barrister? It was called "the scruple shop," by the Oxford scholars, and, as might be readily conceived, it was not very successful business.*

* To give a practical illustration of the operation of "the Scruple Shop," shortly after it was instituted, we annex the following account:—

"A Public Conference between the six Presbyterian Ministers and some Independent Commanders, held at Oxford, on Thursday, November 12th, 1646.

"Sir,—Though you be never so *serious*, I must break in upon you. I am in pain till I have propagated our laughter to you, which hath held us ever since last Scruple Thursday. You know the Scruple Office, where the Doubting Sisters are carried with zeal, to join in a reformation with the Resolving Brethren, and burdened consciences come to lay down their loads, and go away with *others*—where the Resolvers take away their doubts, and gain the Doubters. The six Presbyterian divines have been so much worsted by the Independent commanders, that in a late public disputation they asserted 'that they had no commission from God to be ministers,' in the presence of 200 or 300 schollars and others, which much blanked those worthies who were sent thither to reform that University, and to resolve queries, doubts, and scruples. Next Thursday, November 19th, they were concerned utterly to waive any more conscience-resolving disputes."—King's Pamph., Brit. Museum, 287-4. Another account: "A True Relation of the Late Conference," published November 26th, 1646, says "You hear how the late apostles, Mr. Reynolds, &c., have set up a Scruple House, where they sit each Thursday to resolve the doubts of the perverse weak consciences. This place, the Independents (*a stout generation of tender consciences!*) have found out, and after

They were oftentimes, doubtless, sincere men, but surely their views of the nature of the Christian religion were very defective. The pulpit was made a means of preaching war and bloodshed, and exciting those passions of our nature, which are not less earthly and devilish because arrayed in the garb of high sounding and scriptural language. Marshall thus preached before the Commons, February 23rd, 1641. "He is a cursed man that withholds his hands from shedding of blood, or that shall do it fraudulently, *i.e.*, kill some and save some. If he go not through with the work, he is a cursed man, when this is to be done on Moab, the enemy of God's church." Again, Case on Daniel xi., 32, to the Commons. "Cursed be he that withholdeth his sword from blood, that spares when God saith strike, that suffers those to escape whom God hath appointed to destruction." He also thus preaches to the Commons, November 5th, 1644. "Do justice to the greatest. Saul's sons are not to be spared; no, nor may Agag, nor Benhadad, tho' themselves kings: Timri and Cosbi, though princes of the people, must be pursued unto their tents. This is the way to consecrate yourselves to God." On January 15th, 1643, the same preacher says, "In vain are the high praises of God in your mouths, unless a two-edged sword in your hand." A Royalist writer says, "the pulpit sounded as much as the drum, and the preacher spit as much flame as the cannon." 'Curse ye Meroz,' was the text, and blood and plunder,

three weeks' solicitation, gained that on Thursday last they might be heard." Lieutenant-Colonel Huson set forth the syllogism, "They who hinder the consciences of the Saints, and inflicted *corporal* punishment for *spiritual* weaknesses were 'strikers!'" but the esteemed ministers are such, *ergo*, &c. Dr. Reynolds then answered. The captain then proceeds: "They who take unto themselves the goods of others, restoring nothing of *value or recompense*, are covetous. But the esteemed ministers were such," *ergo*, &c.

the comment and the use."* "A grievous error," says Marsden, "had long infected the Puritan theology." "The examples of the Old Testament in all political affairs, were asserted to be those which christian men and christian communities were bound to follow." The enemies of Christ and his Church were to be treated like the enemies of the Jewish Church of old. "This was the worst error of the Puritans. Eventually it destroyed their piety, their reputation, and their cause."

We have seen that the principles of the Independent Churches in Holland, and especially those of Smyth of Amsterdam, the father of the General Baptists, struck at the root of this and other errors which lent so repulsive an aspect to Presbyterian theology. Dr. Stoughton says† that the Puritans were not only champions of predestination, but that they "identified it with the doctrine of salvation by grace." It may be said of them, that while they grasped firmly, and set forth faithfully, the great doctrine of justification by faith only, in opposition to the Romish doctrine of justification by the merit of works, there was, both in their case and in that of the Anglican divines of that day, "a lack of that teaching which exalts the regenerating and sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit." There can hardly be a doubt that, in the words of Sanderson,‡ the celebrated Anglican churchman, a truly pious and excellent man, there were many among the extreme Puritan or Presbyterian party, who "thought that they might be religious first, and then just and merciful; that they might sell their consciences and yet have something left that was worth keeping; that they might be sure they were elected, though

* "A Loyal Tear," a sermon on sin, p. 30. 1667.

† "Ecclesiastical History of England."

‡ Quoted by Dr. Stoughton in his "Church of the Commonwealth," vol. ii., p. 328

their lives were visibly scandalous ; that to be cunning was to be wise ; that to be rich was to be happy, though their wealth was got without justice or mercy."

Let us, for a moment, contemplate, *not* the views of the extreme section of the Puritan or Presbyterian party, but those of the pious Richard Baxter. In his "Humble Advice of the Heads of those things which were offered to many Honourable Members of Parliament," December 24th, 1655, in order "to make the name of this Parliament honourable to all generations, and bring many thousand souls to heaven (!)" this good man actually advises the appointment of public catechisers to teach some creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and then the "Assembly's Shorter Catechism," and that "*all* persons submit to be catechised by these ministers under *some fit penalty every month* they shall refuse to be catechised." He also advises that the laws already in force respecting the observance of the Lord's-day be put in operation, and that the officers be authorized "to whip those that cannot pay. . . . For the custom of setting in stocks doth make them contemn it. The like I move for swearers, drunkards, and prohibited ale sellers."

Baxter set forth, in 1659, a scheme of government embodying the ideas of Geneva and New England, entitled, "A Holy Commonwealth, or Political Aphorisms opening the True Principles of the Government;" and from this we may glean the practical measures which the Puritan or Presbyterian party had in store for us, had their triumph been complete. He discussed "how a Commonwealth may be reduced to this theocratical temper" (p. 241). In the first place "the ministers of Christ are . . . to 'be generally *able, judicious, godly, faithful, diligent men.*'" Secondly, "*no persons to be electors, none*

as Cives (or free subjects commonly called burgesses or enfranchised persons"—p. 219), but "those who have publicly owned the Baptismal Covenant, personally, deliberately and seriously" (p. 247). And further, "that ordinary despisers of God's public worship, or neglecters of it, and of the guidance of God's ministers" (p. 249) not to have a vote! Not only so, but since the "ordering of the churches" required the "exercise of holy discipline," they would, in conjunction with their minister, have the power to disfranchise any person by excommunicating them. These powers seemed to Baxter himself to require some check on the ministers' power of admission or rejection of Church members, and he suggested that "the Government should appoint a new class of functionaries as 'church justices,' or 'censors,' who were to be '*the wisest*' that the Government could select, and who were to meet with the Church officers, and form a barrier to an improper use by the ministers, of their power" (p. 252). He very justly remarks, that in order to set up this "Holy Commonwealth—to make the Commonwealth more divine—our *Parliament* must be more *divine!*" (p. 257).

Let us conceive the practical operation of such methods of government as these upon the population, rich and poor, and we may thank God that this country escaped the infliction, *even for a few short years*, of the legislative enactments contemplated by the Presbyterian party, and those who participated with them in their thorough-going ideas of a fusion of Church and State. We may see, also, that the despised "Sectaries"—the section of the Independents and Baptists who did not forsake their principles, and the Society of Friends—promulgated views of the spiritual nature of the Christian religion, and of religious liberty, which saved this nation from a course calculated to bring

all religion into discredit, and make infidelity to take root and flourish.

Dr. Stoughton's view of Fox's character, and the effects of his teaching, are well worthy of perusal; with a courage and breadth of view shared by few writers on the subject, he has done justice to the important bearing of the doctrinal and practical views of the nature of Christianity which were propagated by George Fox, upon the condition of religious thought and feeling which we have endeavoured to describe. He says,* "by Fox's public teaching he became more widely known, and exerted an influence which has lasted from that day to this." "Believing in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity,† and regarding them in an anti-calvinistic light—strong in a simple, evangelical faith, but without any theological discipline of thought, preferring the words of Scripture to the words of men—he added to all this, as the first fruits of his mystical tendencies, a belief in the "inward light," even the revelation of Christ in the soul; not as superseding Holy Scripture, but as its necessary witness and gracious supplement. He dwelt largely upon redemption through Christ, as consisting in a deliverance from sin, not simply from its guilt, but from its power—a *view of salvation of the very last importance*—and one which had been, at least partially, obscured through the prominence given by some theologians of the day to the *doctrine of pardon*, and the change effected in our legal relationship by the work of Christ, without a due exhibition of the *moral change in the heart and life*, which forms so important an aspect of the one

* "Church of the Commonwealth," vol. ii. p. 354. See also the whole of his remarks, pp. 348 to 359.

† "Penn states the doctrine of Quakerism, in his preface to the "Life of Fox," xiii., and seq."

salvation of the Gospel of God." Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, in his lecture on the character of George Fox, seems to have seized by a kind of personal sympathy, the salient points of his character, and the religious movement of which he was the originator, when he says, " Now it happened that the " Puritans, who had been like the spring buds and blossoms, " were getting into the sere and yellow leaf, and the Inde- " pendents, and Baptists, and other sects, who were at " times thoroughly and even remarkably spiritual, were " growing worldly, political, and vain glorious. They had " an opportunity of grasping the carnal sword, and they " embraced that opportunity ; and from that very moment " very many of them lost the spirituality for which they " had been eminent. The danger was, lest the Evangelical " sects should quietly settle down into one State Church, " make a scramble for the good things of the ecclesiastical " establishment, and preach each one after its own fashion, " in the numbness of death rather than in the power of life. " At that very moment God sent into the world George " Fox, who must have been the most troublesome man in " the world to those good easy souls who counted upon a " quiet season of sleep. They had said, ' soul, take thine " ease, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.' It " was by the mouth of George Fox that God said to each " one of them, ' thou fool.' George Fox, it seems to me, " was a blessing, not to you alone, but to the whole of " Christendom. He stood up in the face of the Christian " Church, and said to it, ' No, thou shalt not do this. " Thou shalt not conform thyself to the world. Thou " shalt not go into an unholy alliance with the State, there " shall still be in the midst of thee a spiritual people, who " shall bear their protest that Christ's kingdom is not of " this world, and that religion standeth not in forms and

"ceremonies, but is a matter connected with the inner man,
"and is the work of God's Spirit in the heart.' I look upon
"George Fox rather as a *practical*, than a *doctrinal* man."

Lord Macaulay has used his talents to caricature Fox. The simplicity and earnestness of Fox's character would not admit of the method of treatment adopted in the case of William Penn, and since he was unable to represent George Fox as a knave or a villain, he draws his portrait as that of a fool, "with an intellect too much disordered for liberty, and not sufficiently disordered for Bedlam." Macaulay has been ably and temperately answered by J. S. Rowntree, in "An Enquiry into the Truthfulness of Lord Macaulay's Portraiture of George Fox."^{*}

Marsden says, † respecting Fox, "A young man of one-and-twenty, aroused to the contemplation of his future being, and withdrawn by the instant presence of a world unseen from the opening charms of life and its joyous prospects, presents a scene of moral grandeur, with which, the man who is unaffected, must rank amongst the most depraved and brutish of his kind. His mission rested upon one idea, the greatest that can penetrate the mind of man—'God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.' He saw the best men of his time pursuing two separate objects, which appeared, indeed, to them to be the same, but betwixt which his penetrating intellect was at no loss to discover a mighty chasm. The one was the glory of God, the other the setting up of some idol of their own—some model of immaculate Church government." Mr. Marsden might have added, that their object was to enlist the strong arm of the State on their side, and to cause all to bow

* Kitto, London.

† "Later Puritans," pp. 236, 336, 338.

down to that form which they considered essential to the existence of christianity, and to force men to violate their conscience in contributing to the support of this "idol." Men had therefore the choice of becoming either Atheists, hypocrites, or Separatists, and the result was, greater and greater disunion in the Church of Christ. There is no feature of Fox's character more striking, than *his absolute separation from all the political aims and objects of the men of his time.* It is the more important to notice this, since a view has been taken by several writers of ability, that a covert intention existed in the Society to interfere with matters of State. While the Early Baptists and Independents started in the movement, in which Fox bore his part, with the same purely religious views, and a large number of their Churches steadily adhered to them, there cannot be a doubt that their religious influence was gradually lessened by their meddling with politics. This feature he succeeded in impressing on his followers; and the almost entire absence of political allusions in the great mass of the religious literature of the Society, and even in the most private correspondence of Fox and the early preachers, proves beyond a doubt the entirely religious character of the movement. There was, however, no morbid shrinking from political life on the part of Fox's followers, nor did Fox teach the incompatibility of the duties of a christian, and of a magistrate. They were, however, fully occupied with the salvation of men's souls, an object which absorbed all their energies.

One great exception must however be made as to the influence of Fox and his Society upon the politics of the time.*

* The perusal of the following extract from a political tract, written in 1645, will explain the state of feeling existing when Fox commenced preaching. The statement that if the "King placed the Episcopal clergy, and the Parliament the Presbyterian

Fox was the most persevering and consistent opponent of the principle of the support of religion by the State. In the present day we shall be fully prepared to give him

clergy, in the fore front of the battle, a ‘reconciliation’ would have been effected; because they would have ‘preached as zealously for peace as they do now for war,’ and the exclamation that ‘a priest must not forsooth be meddled with,’ and that he was free from all taxes,” are worthy of notice. The whole extract enables us vividly to conceive the character of the times in which he lived, and explains his position—see page 16 of “Martin’s Echo, or a Remonstrance from His Holinesse reverend Young Martin Mar-Priest, responsorie to the late Sacred Synodicall Decretall, in all humility presented to the reverend, pious, and grave consideration of the Right Reverend Father in God, the Universall Bishop of our soules, his superlative Holinesse Sir Simon Synod.” 1645

“Rejoice! rejoice, good people, for this blessed reformation, which is ready, like an evening wolfe, to cease upon you, and your loving friends and neighbours; stand still gaping with your mouths, and quietly bow down your backs, whilst you are bridled and saddled, and let the holy, humble, and gentle Presbyters get up and ride; they will doubtlesse deal very meekly with you, and not put you out of your pace, though the Proverbe be, set a beggar a hors-back, and hee'l ride to the Devill, though they have spurs, yet they will not use them. You remember how the bishops boasted you furiously too and fro like Jehu, the son of Nimshy, untill with soundring and surbates they had even wearied you of your lives; the gentle Presbyters will in no wise ride you so hard, though some malignants would make you believe that Sir John will never be off your backs, because it is intended hee shall have his holy spirituall courts in every parish in the kingdome, but this benefit you are like to have, that if by his continuall riding, he so gawle your backs and shoulders, that you can no longer endure, but cry out by reason of your soare oppression, you shall have liberty graunted you, to leap out of the frying-pan into the fire, by making your appeal to the Common Councill of Presbyters forsooth, where, when you shall come with this complaint, ‘Your fathers, the bishops, made our work grievous, and our parochial Presbyters (those Lyons whelps) doe add thereto, now doe you ease somewhat the grievous servitude, and heavy yoak put upon us;’ you may expect from this Honourable Court an answer like unto that of Rehoboam’s, to those distressed people that cryed unto him, ‘Our father made your yoaks heavy, but wee will adde thereto; our fathers chastised you with whips, but wee will chastise you with scorpions; and mend yourselves as you can, for we are the divine power, and consequently the lawgivers both of Church and State, and therefore you are to be content, and submit yourselves to your superiors, your severall Presbyters in your severall parishes that have the rule over you must in no wise be resisted; but, as it is meet, be humbly obeyed in all things that they shall command you, and their power is not to be questioned, for the same power which lately was resident and confin’d to the breast of one man, to wit, an archbishop, is inherent and of divine right in the body of the Presbytery, and convey’d equally to every particular Presbyter; therefore, if their Episcopall power be offensive and obnoxious to you, never expect to

credit for his clear view of the innumerable evils which have been entailed upon the cause of true religion by the principle of a State Church, and to admire the amazing

have it otherwise, for your Parliaments themselves cannot lawfully help you.' Now have you not cause to rejoice for this jubilee, this yeere of deliverance from your antichristian servitude to Egyptian bondage? Yes, sure, therefore, I say, rejoice and be glad, and again rejoice, lift up your heads, for doubtlesse your redemption draweth nigh, the righteous shall be delivered out of trouble, and the wicked shall come into his stead,— Prov. xi. 8. But in plain termes (loving friends, neighbours and countreymen), let us a little reason together seriously. Have not you borne the brunt and heat of this unnaturall warre? Is it not you who pay all the taxes, cessments, and oppressions whatsoever? Is not the whole burthen laid upon your backs; burthen after burthen, even till your backs breake? How many thousands of you, who were of great estate, are even reduced yourselves, your dear wives and children, to misery and extream poverty? How many thousands and millions have you exhausted; yea, hath not your hands been liberall beyond your abilities? How freely have you brought in your gold, your silver, your jewells, rings, &c., which in London, Middlesex, and Essex, amounted to eleven millions, besides threescore millions extracted out of the countries, with the innumerable summes otherwise raised, and spent in this service? Hath not your blood, the blood of your deare children and friends, being only engaged and spilt; and is it not daily shed in this quarrell, while the Presbyters clap you on the backs, animate, encourage and preach out your very lives and estates, and involve you in all these miseries, and themselves touch it not with the tip of their little finger. You have your husbands, your sonnes, and servants impress'd from you, and forsooth, a priest must not be meddled withal under sacrallidge, blasphemy, or profanesse at least; they are freed from all charges and taxations, and all is laid upon you; and notwithstanding your insufferable misery, your insupportable charge and oppression under which you groane, and are fit to expire; those greedy wretches are not ashamed to exact their tythes, though they pluck it out of your children's mouths; there had been more need for an ordinance to have eas'd the priests, and impress'd them to the warres, for that would have been more conduent to the kingdome's good, for should but the King set his Episcopall clergy, and the Parliament their Presbyterian clergy, in the fore front of their battell's forlorne hope, and put them, instead of other honest, innocent, harmlesse soules, upon all their desperate attempts, without doubt, they would as zealously preach for peace, as they now do for warre, they would quickly agree and turne as they were, rather than loose all. I am confident this would prove the most effectuall meanes of our reconciliation than any that hath yet been attempted; consider this I beseech you, call to mind all your former expences, ventures, cessments for this present war, and the miserable condition you and the whole kingdome strugleth in, as it were for life, and are now all ready to be devoured; your estates are wasted, your men slayne, your hands weakened, and the kingdome is fit to be overrunne; your strength decayeth, and your enemie encreaseth, and all your assistance hath been convey'd through the hands of the Presbyterian party, they have

energy with which he pursued his object. Fox had strong hopes of Cromwell putting an end to tithes. He did not scruple to tell Cromwell that God had raised him up for

borne all offices, and have had all in their owne disposing, but what is become of it? Wise men say that the treasures and wealth that hath been spent for the managing of this warre, would have maintained a greater warre seven yeeres longer; somebody have feathered their nests, though yours are bare; now, how think you it is otherwise possible, but the kingdome must be ruin'd, if this course be continued, and to adde more certaintie of destruction to it, these men, now in this our greatest extremity, labour to divide the Parliament partie in twaine. Before the Synod was assembled, the cryes of the people were heard, their petitions answered, miseries redress'd, monopolies removed, oppression eased, tender consciences respected, the servants of God delivered out of prisons, courts of tyranny and oppression suppress'd, &c. But since their session the case is quite altered; nothing but Jesuiticall and Machiavellian policy hath been on foot; thousands of petitions of poor widdows, orphans, and all manner of distressed oppressed persons, who cry daily, and cannot be heard, and these fatt priests can have ordinance upon ordinance for their ends; they can have the sweat of other men's browes confirm'd upon them by an ordinance, whiles others cannot have their just requests for their owne rights answered; though their wives and children perish, our Presbyters' wives must goe like ladies, with their silkes and tafferty, some with their fans, and silver watches, forsooth, hang by their girdles, to please the pretty sweet fac'd lovelie moppets withall; prittie things, 'tis pittie there's not an ordinance all this while for them to weare rattles; consider this with yourselves, and for what your estates and blood hath been engag'd. The liberties of the subject, and the Protestant religion, now how much, after this vast expence, this sea of blood, of the subjects' liberties have you attain'd? Even thus much, hee that shall open his mouth freely for the vindication of your native liberties, cannot doe it without the hazard of his owne, yea, of his life. I know that the priests thirst after my blood, but I call the GOD of Heaven to witness, would it quench their thirst, and be a ransome for our posterity; I would freely offer it to the common good, and as for the Protestant religion, hath it not been lock'd up in the breasts of the Assembly? hath not your faith been pin'd upon their sleeve? your estates spent, and your blood shed for the result of their minds, right or wrong, and so have fought for you know not what? But it may be you'l say, you have engag'd for the suppression of prelacy, high commission, &c., you have indeed beat the bush, but the Presbyters have caught the hare; instead of one high commission in the whole kingdome, you shall have one in every parish under the name of a Parochiall Sessions, besides the generall high commission call'd the Common Councill of Presbyters, now have you not to shun the smoak, skipt into the fire? is the matter anything amended; sure you have got a worthy reformation, but it may be you have a better esteem of these new courts, then of the old high commissinon; let me aske you, doe you thinke that they'l be better than their patterne? Let me give you a glance of the proceedings of our Scotch brethren in Ireland, and I think you may discerne a bear by his paw."

that very end, and that his government would never be permanent, unless he swept away what Fox regarded as the source of nearly all the ecclesiastical evils of the time, and the only "Godly reformation of the Church according to the Word," which would be effectual. Fox obtained the signature of *fourteen thousand* men and *seven thousand* women (whose names were printed) to a petition for the abolition of tithes. That this was Fox's work, is pretty clearly shown by a paper from him, in the Swarthmore collection, dated 1659, exhorting "all women Friends to set their names to a paper against tythes." * This agitation against tithes was increasing every day when Fox was preaching in 1648. † Cromwell was well known to be against tithes,‡ and in July, 1653, progress was so far made towards their abolition, that the question was put to the House of Commons. The Presbyterian clergy were alarmed, and it was postponed, but this great question hung

* Swarthmore Collection. "And so if all the women in England send up their names against tythes, I shall send them by women to the Parliament, for many women have sent up their names, and some have not, but have stopped. Therefore that all may send their names that be free, with all speed to London;" dated 1659 (or 1657). Also a letter from a Scotch lady, Margaret Hamilton, by which it appears that he had asked her to procure the names of "all Friends in Scotland." This is dated 20th 4th month, 1659.

† "Tythe Gatherers no Gospel Officers," London, 1645, shows the state of public feeling. It is addressed to the Reverend Assembly of Divines. "I understand likewise of several petitions by multitudes of the most conscientious, freeborn subjects of England demonstrating how unjust it is that a small number who *in compliment call themselves our ministers*, should at their own pleasure become our masters, and so contrary to the subjects' liberty force from us the fifth part of the whole kingdom in valuation without either articles of consent, and that which is worst of all, they lay claim to it by *Divine right*, for such services as seem to many little less than anti-christian or idolatrous." Written probably by an Independent.

‡ Cromwell told Mr. Jersey and others, "Call me Jugler, if tythes are not taken away by September the third, last." Yet he hath ratified a former statute and order which is for "compelling those who refuse, to pay them, and to pay treble damages."—"The Protector so called, in part Unvailed;" London, 1655, by a late member of the army who was an eye and ear witness of these things.

in the balance till 1659. In a letter quoted by Mrs. Webb, in her lively and interesting work, "The Fells of Swarthmore hall," dated 9th month, 1659, it is said, "the Parliament have declared that the priests' maintenance shall be by way of tythes. Till now they have pretended at the least to regulate the law, and that the priest should have his tythe (only) till another maintenance be found." In another it says, that "the officers of the army bring little good to perfection," and that "they talked of reducing the parishes from 9000 to 3000, so as to have *certain* ministers who shall be the State's." It must not be supposed that this part of Fox's mission was altogether unwelcome—but the Presbyterian clergy naturally regarded him as their bitterest enemy, and stirred up the ungodly rabble to persecute him.

The new Presbyterian clergy were now far from popular. Men will bear evils, to which they are accustomed, with patience. If an abuse is only sufficiently ancient, it is comparatively easy to bear. A clergyman who did not trouble the consciences of men by his preaching, who lived on easy terms with his parishioners, spending much of his time chatting with them pleasantly at the village inn,* sitting on the ale-benches and drinking with them, was an agreeable addition to the society of the place. The Puritan lecturer who preached and went his way, was a more popular man than he was when he ejected the old incumbent.† It was necessary to stimulate the process of ejection which was rapidly

* Henry Denne in (1642) his sermon to the clergy—*The Doctrine and Conversion of John the Baptist*—told his clerical auditors, "Thus do you dissolve in the tavern that which you confirmed in the pulpit, making a mock at the ordinances of God."

† "The Ministers' Hue and Cry, or A True Discovery of the Unsufferable Injuries, Robberies, Cozenages, and Oppressions now acted against Ministers"—a dialogue between four men—Paul Shepherd, a minister of the gospel (Presbyterian), Barnaby Sheap, an impropriator or lay parson, Robin Rob-minister, or one that robs and defrauds the minister of his maintenance, Tom Tythe-short, one that pays his tythes

going on. In the instructions to the Earl of Manchester, to appoint the Essex Committee for Scandalous Ministers, Section 5, we find, "Because of the backwardness of parishioners to complain of ministers (*i.e.*, of the Anglican clergy), although they be very scandalous, too many being enemies to that blessed reformation, and loath to come under a powerful ministry, and some sparing their ministers, because such ministers, to gain the good opinion of their people, spare them in their tythes, you are willed to call unto some well-affected men in every hundred, who, having no private engagement, to give you information both what can be deposed and who can depose to it."*

The judgment we form of the state of the ministry in England, during the time of G. Fox's preaching, which

and duties short of what is due. By Richard Culmer, London, 1657. Addressed to the Honourable Committee of Parliament for plundered ministers.

Page 1. Tom (*log.*)—"Neighbour Robin, well met; I hear the priests and impropriators shall have no more tythes." Robin—"Then I'll sing, 'Hey down go they'—I mean those called 'Able Orthodox Divines.'" Then follows an amusing account of the way in which the unfortunate new ministers were robbed of their tythes. Page 13. Robin to Paul Shepherd (the minister who pleads his "Divine right" to tythes)—"But we *don't* take you for our minister, because you were *not chosen* by our parish. You were put upon our parish to serve us against our wills, and if the Parliament, or Committee, or any other, provide us servants, let *them* pay them their wages. If we had our wills in keeping our old priest, or in choosing a new one, we would have paid them to a farthing. And therefore you may preach, but you shall get no tythes of us but what you can recover by law." Robin ends—"Farewell, and be hanged. I'll say no amen to the prayer of any priest of you all. Tom (addresses Tom Tythe-short), hear none of them all; come not near their steeple-house. If the Parliament settle any certain maintenance for the ministers, I am as much against this as against tythes; but, Tom, howsoever, look you to your tythes, I'll look to mine." Page 21—"They are all Baal's priests, there is no such calling. There is no office of the ministry. Every one that will may be, and is a minister, a preacher, 'if he can speak giftedly.'" This is evidently a Presbyterian pamphlet, and Paul Shepherd sets forth with equal force and distinctness, the woeful position of the Presbyterian minister, and the increasing depravity of the human heart as manifested in a general indisposition to pay the tythes to the new Presbyterian ministers.

* Quoted p. 211, "David's Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex."

we are about to describe, will greatly influence our opinion with reference to his language and conduct.

In the time of Fox, we have to remember, that however zealous the Parliament and the Assembly of Divines were to provide the country with "learned, painful, and godly ministers," the supply was not equal to the demand. Baillie declares, that even after Scotland should have sent all the "good youths" she could afford, southwards, it was thought that some thousands of Churches would be without ministers.* Baxter very justly says,† "The Parliament could not *make* men learned, or godly, but only put in the learnedest and ablest that they *could have*." They drew largely from the ranks of the Puritan lecturers, who had become under the former persecutions of the bishops, to some extent a distinct class, while many of the ejected clergy were unquestionably "scandalous ministers." A few of them were men of the greatest eminence, such as Hall, Brownrigg, Morton, Prideaux, Davenant, Hammond, Sanderson, and Fuller. It has been debated whether these ejections were, or were not, to a large extent political ejections, under cover of the unquestionable necessity for the displacement of the "scandalous." Baxter says, "The power of selecting at first lay with a committee of the Parliament," and it appears to us, that the fact that the one-fifth of the livings which was secured to the ejected was only paid to them *on removing out of the parish*, shows us clearly that these ejections were made quite as much from political, as from religious motives.†

* Letter 78, vol. ii., p. 55.

† "Baxter's Life," by Silvester, p. 74.

‡ In "David's Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex," p. 571, is an instance of a purely political ejection. After stating the political bias of the clergyman, the document says,—"Therefore the Lords and Commons, taking into consideration for the supply of an able, godly man, sequestered," &c., &c.

The benefices of England were suddenly placed in the hands of the Presbyterian party, and although many scandalous ministers were ejected, we can readily conceive that the result was rather the finding of places for men, than men for places. Mr. Lathbury * informs us that Pierce told Baxter, that "worse men were put into livings than the worst that were put out."† This is probably an extreme statement, but on the other hand Baxter's statements have been too readily accepted by historians without considering, that however trustworthy Baxter is in the bare facts he relates, in matters which relate to men's characters and aims he is often very greatly mistaken. Later on, under the Committee of Tryers, the selection was probably in some points of view more satisfactory, and in some less, than that made under lay influence. When we learn that the divines of the Assembly were ordered by Parliament to go down into the country to stir up the people to espouse their cause and summon them to arms, can we doubt that the Presbyterian ministers, selected to fill the places of the ejected Anglican clergy, were generally speaking *thorough going political partisans?* ‡ and, if so, we can readily see that such a ministry, even where it was learned and respectable, did not commend itself to those who sympathized with the views of Fox.

But we have distinct evidence of the character of the clergy who conformed to the Directory and who took the Covenant, and also of the lecturers, in the evidence which exists of the state of the Church prior to 1634. There are strong

* In his "History of the Book of Common Prayer," p. 201, note.

† Saltmarsh writes in 1645,—see "A New Quere,"—"We have not yet any experiment of our new clergy, who are many of them *branches of the old stock;*" p. 5.

‡ British Museum Collection of Ordinances and Declarations, "Die Jovis, 10 Augusti, 1643, ordered by the Lords and Commons, &c. . . . that the *Divines* of the Assembly are hereby desired to go down into their several counties to *stir up the people in their several counties to rise in their defence,*" p. 288.

reasons for supposing that matters had not materially altered when the Long Parliament began to sit in 1640. John Canne, a pastor of the "Ancient English Church, in Amsterdam," and first pastor of the Broadmead Church, Bristol, a man of great ability and irreproachable character, wrote in 1634, his "Necessity of Separation."* In this work he quotes a number of Puritan writers in such a way as to give us considerable insight into the state of the ministry, in England, at that period. The work throws a striking light on the expressions used by Fox and the early preachers in connection with him. Canne says, "It may be that some will expect that I should write something of their lecturers, and the rather because they, in the judgment of many, are thought to be the best ministers;—of their life and doctrine I say nothing," but he says that when the character of the ministry they had taken up was questioned, "they have not been able to agree among themselves *what kind* of ministry it is they have taken up." He objects to their covenanting for a given time with people to lecture, and then leaving them, and adds, "a true pastor may not do so, for if he should he were worse than an hireling, which leaves not the sheep till he sees the wolf coming, but many of them (leave the sheep) when they see *a richer lectureship coming towards them!*" With reference to the inferior clergy, he says, "we now come to the inferior ministers, and will begin first with their bare Readers,—these poor creatures the Non-conformists (*i.e.* the Puritans as distinguished from the Separatists) do call 'idle idols,' yea, 'bastardly idols,' 'greedy curs,' 'dumb dogs,' 'slayers of the people,' 'wolves,' 'ignorant asses,' 'filthy swine,' 'such as are not worthy to live in a well ordered

* Republished by the Hansard Knollys Society.

commonwealth,' 'foolish shepherds,' 'unsavory salt, good for nothing but to be cast to the dunghill,' 'cancers of the church,' 'a swarm of caterpillars, the trash and riffraff of the nation like the frogs of Egypt, leading many thousands into the ditch.'" "Nay," says Canne, "they say more," (page 19) and he quotes from "A Dialogue concerning the Strife in the Church,"—"If the devil did make and send forth ministers he would not find worse men upon earth, and if he would have worse, he must bring them out of hell."

We must bear in mind that these are quotations from writers of the *Puritan party when out of power*, describing the state of the church fifteen years only before Fox commenced preaching. It cannot be contended that in 1648, the Parliament had succeeded in purging the church from such men, and it will be seen that the language of the Puritan party goes far beyond that used by Fox and the early preachers of the Society, in denouncing the state of the Church. The very expressions used by them were current terms among the Puritan writers many years prior,—*e.g.* Fox preached to the same class of persons "who will fly to a bigger maintenance because he is an hireling, the sheep are none of his, who will go to bowles or pleasures with the peoples' lightness and wantonness that are given to wine and covetousness."* The expressions "idol shepherds," "dumb dogs," "shepherds which seek after the fleece," "greedy dogs which can never have enough," &c., were used freely in discussions on church matters long prior to his time. The 34th chapter of Ezekiel is constantly quoted, not only by Fox, but by all those who objected on either side to either Presbyterian or

* "The Professor's Catechism, &c.," by G.F., 1657, p. 10.

Episcopalian ministers, and we have before found that the same texts were applied to the Presbyterian ministry by Bishop Hall and by George Fox. The expression "dumb dogs," applied to *non-preaching* ministers, and, in some cases, to the Presbyterian lay elders. "Idol shepherds" was originally applied to those who wore what were deemed Popish vestments, who were associated with "idol temples," where the sacrifice of the *Mass*, or its equivalent, was offered. These expressions can be traced fifty years before Fox used them.*

We meet later on with a third class of ministers with whom Fox and his friends came into violent collision. These were the Independents and Baptists who had slipped into good livings. These men, feeling that their hold on the tithes might be shorter than they could desire, were very exacting. Such men were not spared by Fox. They were traitors to their principles, and it was found by the Friends, that "when the Presbyterians and Baptists got into the Common-prayer parsonages, then they made fearful havock of us, by spoyleing our goods and casting us into prison because we declared against their tithes. The Baptist sued us for the very tythe eggs. It can hardly be declared the cruel havock and spoyle the Presbyterians and Independents made. Their priests made poor people come up two hundred miles because they could not give fourpence for a hemlock, and thus they served many for very small things. They took the cow that gave them milk; their corne to make them bread, and the very beds they ley on; their cloathes and their children's cloathes; their oxen and horses they should plow withall, and their

* Neal, quoting from A. Wood, states that the seven Puritan divines appointed in September, 1646, to preach at Oxford, called "some of the heads of the University 'dumb dogs,' these were of the King's party and *Church of England* clergy.

kettles, pots and spoons, that they had not a pott to boyle their victuals with."* This appears to be written by a person who had been in the midst of the scenes he relates, and it gives clear testimony that the Independents and Baptists, who took the places of the Common-prayer men and accepted State pay, did not manifest a whit better spirit than the Presbyterians. It must however be borne in mind that a very large section of the Independents and Baptists entirely repudiated State maintenance,† and held views either absolutely identical with, or closely approximating to, those of Fox, as we shall presently show.

There were in these times a large number of persons who thought they saw two causes of the bitter fruits of Episcopacy and Presbyterianism. The first was the connection of the Church with the State. The second was the existence, in both these Churches, of a *priesthood*. It was a principle of Presbyterianism, "that ministers of the Gospel have as ample a charge and commission to dispense the Word, as well as other ordinances, as the priests and Levites under the Law."‡ Hence they had a divine right to tithes, and claimed, while using the strong arm of the law, to

* MSS. at Devonshire House Library, "How the Lord by his power and Spirit did raise up Friends."

† An instance of an interruption of an Independent State minister, by a Baptist, while baptizing a child before a congregation, occurred at Newport Pagnell. The Baptist, suddenly rapted with a vertiginous motion, "summoned" him by a challenge, in the face of the congregation, to give him and his Brethren of the Separation a meeting there in public. This gave rise to the account of the public dispute, viz., "*The Anabaptists Washt and Washt and Shrunk in the Washing,*" occasioned by a public disputation before a great Assembly of Ministers and other persons of worth, in the church of Newport Pagnell, betwixt Mr. Gibs, minister there, and the author, Richard Carpenter, Independent, London, 1653.

‡ "The form of Presbyterian Church Government, and of the Ordination of Ministers, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines, at Westminister, 1645."

be above the interference of the Government in matters of religion.

In a pamphlet issued by the Independent party, *to which is attached a letter from Cromwell to the House of Commons*, dated October 10th, 1645, after repeating (page 4) the lamentation of the Presbyterians respecting “strange sects, horrid blasphemous opinions, separated assemblies, illiterate pastors, faithful ministers deprived and discouraged in their ministry, public assemblies forsaken, the pretended preachers of new gospels cried up, universal toleration of all opinions pleaded for,” then says, “believe it, and here’s matter enough indeed, for if there be once granted a freedom of speech, an opening of the presses, and a toleration of all opinions, *immediately goes down the glory of the clergy*. Men who are in no more relation to God than other men, but men, errable men like others, assume to themselves a power of judging and censuring of opinions, doctrines, and practices in religion; and then down also falls their profit, for none will henceforth think himself bound by any law of God to pay tythes any longer. *Why do you think THEY (the Presbyterian Clergy) are such enemies to the Independents and all sorts of Separatists?* You imagine it is because they run into errors and damnable opinions, to their souls’ destruction. No such thing; it is only because the *true* Independents and Separatists *do all the very pastor’s offices themselves*, and renounce and disclaim all glory and distinction, from the greatest to the meanest of their flock, and all usurped dominations, being but as any other men in judging of doctrines or practices, and but as the mouth and speaker of the congregation. Also they renounce all right or claim to any pay, and if they want not, their judgment is that they ought rather to give than to receive; the difference is visible enough.” Cromwell’s letter says, “From

brethren we look for *no compulsion*. In other things God hath put the sword into the Parliament's hands for the punishment of evil doers.”*

The principle of lay preaching broke down this analogy between the priest of the Old Testament and the prophet, pastor, or teacher of the New Testament. The lay preacher was as much an elder or bishop, if sent out by a Church, as the man educated for the priest's office in the Church of England, and consecrated, or ordained, by the imposition of the hands of either the bishop or the presbytery. Every christian might become a preacher of the Gospel. If the words, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,” applied only to a consecrated order of men like the priests of the Old Testament, concerned about holy things, into whose province no one was to invade, here was the very essence of Popery. This was, we conceive, the origin of the outburst of lay preaching, which was a feature of the times in which George Fox's lot was cast. This heresy is denounced and satirized in unmeasured language by the Presbyterians.†

There was also another peculiar feature of the times, and this was the association of the Old Testament idea

* “Strong Motives, or a lovely and modest Advice unto the Petitioners for Presbyterian Government, that they endeavour not the compulsion of any in matters of religion more than they wish others to compel them,” &c., &c., whereto is annexed the conclusion of Lieutenant General Cromwell, and Letter to the House of Commons to the same purport, October 10th, 1645.

† One of the staunchest opponents of Independency thus breaks out, “Unhappy Independents, who opened at first, and kept open to this day, the door of the church to these satyrs and vultures, this I-im and Zi-im, the great Owles and Shrick Owles, the wild beasts of the desert and the island, the dragons and all the doleful creatures, to come in, and defile, and make havock of all that is most precious in the house of God!” Preface to “Anabaptism, the True Foundation of Independency, and Antinomyn, Brownism, Familism,” &c., by Robt. Baillie, London, 1646.

of prophecy, with the preaching of gifted ministers. This was not an idea peculiar to those who are called Sectaries. Whether it originated in the ideas suggested by the "prophesings" of Archbishop Grindal, or not, it is impossible to say. In "Baxter's Life," we have an incident related which illustrates the kind of feeling which existed, and the anxiety of Baxter to disclaim any such gift. Baxter preached a funeral sermon at Bridgnorth, on the text, Ezekiel xxxiii., 34. "And when this cometh to pass (lo, it will come) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them." In this sermon he could not "forbear to tell them his fears of some heavy judgment to come on that place, in a sense of the misery of that unprofitable people, and the deep groans I have heard from their faithful pastor for their obdurateness." After the town was burnt down to the ground, he went there and preached from the same text. "But they and I," he says, "were so much interrupted with tears, that (with some pauses) I had much ado to proceed on to the end. I had never before, (nor ever did I since), presume upon such prediction, (nor did I speak that with any pretence of prophecy), but the expression of my fear I could not suppress." In the "Life of Archbishop Usher," by Richard Pain,* we read, that in his sermon preached after ordination, in 1601, he quoted Ezekiel iv., 6,—"And thou shalt bear the iniquity of the House of Judah forty days, I have appointed each day for a year." He made then his conjecture respecting Ireland, viz., "From this year I reckon forty years, and then those whom you embrace shall be your ruin, and you shall bear their iniquity" forty years. In 1641, the Irish rebellion broke out, "then those who

* Folio edition, 1686.

lived to see that day began to think he was *a young prophet*" (page 9). In "David's Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex," (page 617) we find the same idea in an epitaph in Heveningham Church on Samuel Fairclough, one of the Ejected Ministers, who died in 1691,—

"Behold this shrine,
See here *a prophet* and complete divine,
One who the thankless world too late will know,
And by his absence find him to be so ;
When *prophets* die, the worst of ills we fear,
When envoys are recalled, some war is near."

In "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," "Evangelist," we all recollect, "was also a prophet," and foretold Faithfull's martyrdom at Vanity Fair.

There can be little doubt that when Fox affirmed that the professors of his day "could not bear to hear that any one should come, whilst upon earth, into the same power and spirit that the Apostles were in," he was endeavouring to show that an important Christian doctrine was grievously overlooked by the professing christians of his times; but it is also evident, that at the earlier period of the Society's existence, the great success of the early preacher's ministry, the wonderful physical manifestations, the providences attending them, the great change wrought in the souls of some of their converts, and some cures apparently effected on those diseased in mind or body, produced the same effect upon the mind of Fox and his friends, which they did at one period upon the clear, logical, trained intellect of Wesley; and precisely as with Wesley, so with Fox and others, at a later period these views were somewhat modified.

The same may be said of the doctrine apparently set forth in the hasty interruption (for this was an interruption) of the preacher at Nottingham, who said that "all doctrines, religions, and opinions were to be tried by the written

Word, the sure word of prophecy" (Pet. i. 19). Fox cried out, "Oh, no, it is not the Scripture, it is the Holy Spirit, by which holy men of old gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments are to be tried."* On this Mr. Marsden very justly remarks "This was a dangerous error—for if this doctrine were correct, our last appeal on doubtful questions would be, not to the Bible, but to ourselves;"† but he has overlooked that the meaning of the whole utterances was, that the spiritually minded, true christian could alone use the Scriptures so as to try all doctrines, &c. We cannot suppose him here to have said what was entirely in opposition to his uniform teaching in his writings, &c." Even in such works as Fox's "Great Mystery," we find the same view.‡ These quotations might be multiplied indefinitely; and where at first sight, as in the passage in "Fox's Journal," the meaning may seem to be otherwise, a further examination will always prove that this was the real judgment of Fox and the early Friends. Barclay says,§ "We do look upon them as the only fit outward judge of controversies among christians, and that

* Sewell, vol. i., 1649, p. 27.

+ See remarks in "Later Puritans," p. 241.

† See preface.—"And also this is an invitation to all sects and professors, and of people, to come forth and try if what they hold is according to the Scriptures of Truth, and to do this by evident and sound arguments, and by the best spiritual weapons they have, and to lay aside all this persecution, and unrighteous dealing, and stocking, and whipping, and imprisoning of us for speaking against their religion, and that they come forth in fair disputes to contend in the spirit of meekness for what they profess and practise, and to prove, according to Scripture, their ministry, church, and whole religion, that it is in and by the Spirit and power of God." So Penn, in his works, folio vol. ii.—"We believe the Scripture to be a declaration of the mind of the Holy Ghost, and therefore not superior to the Holy Ghost, but credited, confirmed, and expounded by the Holy Ghost, so that without the illumination of it the Scripture cannot be understood by them that read it. The grammatical and critical sense of the words and allusions therein may be understood, but not the 'spiritual signification.'" p. 912.

§ "Apology."—Scriptures.

whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony may therefore justly be rejected as false. And for our parts, we are willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them, which we never refused, nor ever shall, in all our controversies with our adversaries, as the judge and test. We shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive, certain maxim—that whatsoever any do pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.” The true meaning of Fox was, not that our own individual impressions were to be the sole test of divine truth, but that the Spirit of Christ must dwell in those who are seeking to test the truth of religious opinions by the Scriptures.* “They did not do it aright,” he says, “because they did it without the Holy Ghost.” We cannot but regard the following sentence from Stillingfleet, as a sentence moulded by the experience obtained during the times of Fox, and it so beautifully reconciles the views of Fox with the conclusions of sound evidential reasoning, that we venture to quote it. “Now what conviction there can be to any sober mind conceiving divine authority in any person, without such a power of miracles going along with him, when he is to deliver some new doctrine to the world, I confess I cannot understand. For *although I doubt not that wherever God doth reveal anything to any person immediately, He gives demonstrable evidence, to the inward senses of the soul, that it*

* This will become more clear as we proceed. In the Appendix to “Penn’s Life,” No. xiv. Letter to Baxter, Penn explains to Baxter, that by saying “the Spirit being the rule, I understand what the Apostle did, when he said that ‘as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God.’ I did not mean that all instruments and means are always excluded, only that under the Gospel especially, the Spirit by the holy inspiring of it in a more immediate manner than formerly, was pre-eminently the rule of the saints; as under the Law, the *Law writ on stone*; under the Gospel, the *Law writ in the Heart.*”

comes from Himself, yet this inward sense can be no ground to *another person* to believe his doctrine divine, because no man can be a competent judge of the actings of another's *inward* senses; and it is impossible to *another* person to distinguish the actings of the divine Spirit from strong impressions of fancy." The following quotation from Archbishop Leighton, fully sets forth the views of Fox. It is most important in dealing with the literature of the "Sectaries," to have a correct view of the position maintained by their adversaries, and of the current ideas of the times, and a number of crude and ill-founded conclusions have been drawn, from the doctrinal positions taken by the early Friends, which a larger amount of acquaintance with the controversial history of the times would have avoided.* Archbishop Leighton comments on 1 Cor. ii. 11, thus—which will explain the standpoint from which Fox viewed the subject: "'No man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of man.' But who holds that here? For if a man speak but the things that are *in his spirit*, then others may know them; but the Apostle's aim there, is to conclude that the things of God, even such as were revealed in his word, could *not be known but by his own spirit*, so that though revealed yet, they remain still unrevealed till the Spirit teach *within* as well as without, because they are intelligible by none but by those who are the private scholars and hearers of the Holy Ghost, the author of them, and because there are so few of these, therefore is so little real believing amidst all the noise and profession that we make of it.†"

* See quotation from Whitehead, p. 164.

† "Leighton's Commentaries," i., p. 167. I am indebted to my friend J. S. Rowntree for this quotation.

It has been constantly assumed, we think, upon a very slender basis, that when Fox and the early Friends said "the Lord showed me," this or that, and when he used a variety of other expressions which form in themselves almost a peculiar language, that a direct revelation from Heaven is meant, as distinct as that which the Apostles received in writing the Scriptures. We do not however believe that by Fox's ordinary expressions he intended to convey more than an ordinary conclusion—that he had appropriated, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, an idea originally received through ordinary sources; an idea warranted by Scripture, the mind of the Spirit, the analogy of the faith, and by common sense. To take an extreme instance of this, in which many will be inclined to differ from us, let us take this passage in his journal : "At another time (in 1646), as I was walking in a field on a First-day morning, the Lord opened unto me, that being bred at Oxford and Cambridge, was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ." Now to contend that Fox intends to tell us that this was a *new truth* to his mind, and not, as we believe, the clear perception and appropriation of an old truth which he had (to go no farther) read in the Book of Common Prayer, would be, we think, an absurdity. How could Fox have come in contact with any of the religious people of this period, *e.g.*, the Baptists, without hearing this matter debated, which must have been a subject, at this period, of common conversation among Fox's associates ? Fox appears to us to have had a thorough knowledge of the ideas current in his times, and the mere perusal of the titles of his tracts will show that he kept himself abreast of the great questions which agitated the public mind, and which are expressed in the controversial and other religious literature of the

day.* The peculiar language of Fox's Journal, and some early Friends, must be looked upon as the ordinary language of the religionists of the period, particularly in the middle class of society.

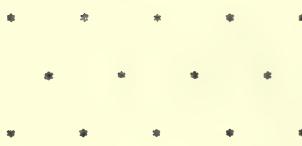
In 1647, an intelligent writer finds fault with the "Independent, Congregational, and other Church ways," for asking that the "erroneous, doubtful, uncertain conceptions

* The annexed passage from Fox's Journal has been pointed out as strikingly like the writings of Jacob Boehmen (the celebrated mystic). I am indebted to Mr. Christopher Walton (whose valuable library of mystical writings is well known) for searching for, at my request, and pointing out to me, a passage which appears to show that not only was Fox conversant with Boehmen's writings, but appears in his journal to presuppose a knowledge of Boehmen's method of stating spiritual experience. I think it will be admitted that the passage in Fox's Journal is perfectly obscure and unintelligible to a reader of the present day, but in placing by it a similar passage in the translation of Behmen's work, published in 1648, which is the date in Fox's Journal, in which the experience is described, its meaning is rendered perfectly clear:—

FOX.

JOURNAL.

1648.



"Now I was come up in spirit *through the Flaming Sword** into the paradise of God, all things were new; and all the Creation gave another smell unto me than before beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, innocence, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Jesus Christ, so that I was come up to the state of Adam before he fell.

* Fox sealed his letters with an engraved seal of a flaming sword.

BÖEHMEN.

"The Second Book concerning the Three Principles of the Divine Essence—of the Eternal Dark, Light, and Temporary World, showing what the Soul, the Image, and the Spirit of the Soul, are; also what Angels, Heaven, and Paradise are; how Adam was *before* the Fall, *in* the Fall, and *after* the Fall," &c., by Jacob Behmen, alias Teutonicus Philosophus, London, 1641.

" . . . then he let them out of the garden, and set the cherubim with a naked (or warning flaming sword) . . . before it to keep the way to the Tree of Life. . . . But the understanding of us poor children of Adam and Eve is sunk so much, that at our last old age we scarce reach the understanding of anything concerning the Fall of Adam and Eve, seeing we must seek very deep for it in the Light of Life, for it is very wonderful which Moses saith, 'God set the Cherubim before the Garden to keep and guard the way to the

contained in their sermons shall be heard and received as the word of the ever-living God," and proceeds to add a sentence which throws a very considerable light upon the language of the Early Friends, and tends to correct the error of attaching a literal meaning to such expressions. "Hence it is," he says, "that some men will neither stir nor undertake anything of any nature, civil or natural, but as they are prompted thereunto (as they

Tree of Life,' who could understand it? If God did not open our eyes, we should speak simply of a Keeper with a Sword, and Reason seeth nothing else, but the Noble Virgin sheweth us the Door, and *how we must enter into paradise through* the sharpness of the sword, yet the sword cutteth the *Earthly* body clean away from the *Holy Element*, and then the *new man* may enter into paradise by the way of life. . . . Now if anybody would come into the Garden, he must press in *through* the Sword of Death—though Christ hath broken the Sword, so that now we can much easier enter *in with our Souls*, yet *there is a Sword before it still.*"

"The Creation was opened to me—how all things had their names given them, according to their nature and virtue. I was at a stand in my mind whether I should practise physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were opened to me by the Lord."

XIII. "After this, about the year 1600, in the 25th year of his age, he was again surrounded with the Divine Life, and replenished with the Heavenly knowledge, in so much as going abroad into the fields, into a green before Neysgate, at Gorlitz, he then sat down, and viewing the Herbs and Grass of the Field in his Inward Light, he saw into their essences, use, and properties, which were discovered to him by their linaments, figures, and signatures." Behmen's "Signatura Rerum" was published in English, 1649.—"Life of Jacob Behmen," by W. Law, London, 1764.

It can hardly be contended that this, which is one of the most curious and unintelligible passages in Fox's Journal, was written by a person who had never read Behmen's works, which had at that period a considerable circulation. There are evidences of an intelligent appreciation of books at Swarthmore Hall. Newcastle is ransacked for a Hebrew grammar and lexicon, and a Greek lexicon is obtained from London, &c.

imagine) by the Spirit, or, as some phrase it, ‘by the drawings forth of the Father;’ taking all their inclinations, likings, or dislikings, to be immediately from God, whereby gross neglects and failings (to say no more) come to be excused, and not only so, but expressly put God’s score.”*

But this does not sufficiently exhibit the atmosphere of religious excitement in which the men of these times lived. The air was thick with reports of prophecies and miracles, and there were men of all parties who lived on the border land between sanity and insanity.

A most curious instance of this is that of Arise Evans, a Welchman, who was born at Bearmouth in the county Merioneth. He claimed the prophetical gift, and was a stout supporter of the King and the Church of England, and the Book of Common Prayer, and in 1653 he informs us that “multitudes of people” enquired day after day of him concerning his “hopes of their redemption from these troublous times.” He informs us, that in 1633, he troubled King Charles by foretelling that both he and his kingdom were to be destroyed, and to the Earl of Essex that he was to be general of all England. In 1635, he prophesied again, that since the King would not regard his prophecies, he would suffer and be put to death, and his kingdom be destroyed and turned upside down; and Evans was put in prison for three years.

He sought and obtained an interview with Cromwell, with the same desire to give true prophetical advice. Cromwell took him into his dining room at his house in Drury Lane, and he and Ireton talked with him till midnight. He advised Cromwell to use the King well, and to reconcile

* “The Vanity of the present Churches, and the Uncertainty of their Preaching Discovered,” pp. 14 and 15, London, 1647.

their mutual interests. On September 1st, 1652, he petitioned the Parliament to receive his prophetical message, because "he only was appointed of God, and none but he on the earth can show the like;" but he was not listened to, and therefore addressed to them his "Voice from Heaven to the Commonwealth of England," 1652, proving that "King Charles and his seed, whose seed by the works of God shall appear to have an unquenchable sovereignty over all the earth, that can never be shaken again." All this was clearly demonstrated out of the Scriptures, and the declaration of Isaiah that the "wayfaring man, though a fool, should not err" in the way of holiness, was declared to be the coming back again of the way of the "common prayer!"

In 1643, he states he received a revelation to maintain the true "Apostolical succession" of the ministers of the Church of England, and Infant Baptism. Whereupon Arise Evans boldly asserted his divine commission at the head quarters of the "Anabaptists, in Coleman street, Bell Alley," and afterwards when "they removed to the Spittle." He disputed with them against "their unruly and ungodly practice, and many times reproved Lamb, the chief father of all the Anabaptists." He maintained "the true church to be the Church of England, and God did confirm my words (he affirms) with signs following." The Baptists however answered, if you have such a call "you are a prophet, but how shall we know this? We have but your bare word for what you say, give us a sign here present and we will believe." A woman rails upon him, and he prophesied that she should not be there "that day seven nights" to do so. Her child dies and his words become true, and thus in his view his prophetical office was triumphantly asserted among these opponents of the Baptism, as well as the

Apostolical Succession, and the Prayer Book of the Church of England.*

A woman, who was a member of Kiffen's Church, went before Cromwell and his Council to give them prophetical advice; she was not only patiently listened to, but was enquired of how such advice could be carried out. For this action however, she came under the disciplinary dealing of the Church.† Cromwell must have had some trouble by the prophetical advice he received. One man advised him to supply the place of the Bishops by twelve Apostles and seventy travelling ministers: he wrote a pamphlet on the subject, which can only be detected to be the production of an insane person, by his admission in it that his family had to restrain him as a violent lunatic.‡ Many persons declared themselves to be "God" and "Christ," "the Spouse of Christ," "the Lamb's wife," &c. Pamphlets were written upon the subject, with titles purporting to be a "true and faithful narrative" of these "grand impostures, abominable practices, horrid blasphemies," &c., even after a surgeon's certificate had been obtained that they were "distracted!"

As early as 1645 there were some who not only maintained that the gift of working miracles had not ceased in the Church, but asserted that they had wrought miracles, and anticipated that this power would be shortly conferred more abundantly.§ Reports of the actual working of miracles were

* "An Echo to the Voice from Heaven, or a Narrative of the Life and Manner of the Special Calling and Visions of Arise Evans. By him published in discharge of his duty to God, and for the satisfaction of those who doubt," pp. 53, 54, 55. Long Alley, Blackfriars, 1652. U. L. Camb. There are fifteen prophetical writings of Arise Evans in the B. M.

† Elizabeth Poole.—See "Alarum of War given to the Army and High Court of Justice," &c., 1649, pp. 3 and 6, &c.

‡ "An Iron Rod put into the Lord Protector's Hands to Break all Anti-Christian Power to Pieces." By John Sanders, of Harben. London, 1655.

§ Edwards' "Gangreua," Error No. 145, Part i.

widely spread. One of the most notable instances of this power being claimed, was that of Mathew Coker, who wrote tracts in which he stated that he cleansed a leper, caused the lame to walk, restored defective sight.* His claims were accepted by Robert Gill, D.D., Rector of St. Mary, Alder Mary. He wrote to Lady Conway, expressing his belief that miracles were not ceased in the Church, and that Mr. Coker had that power. The Earl of Pembroke, he tells her, was entirely convinced of this, and indeed had been greatly benefited by the laying on of his hands, and that he had witnessed the cure of a mad person.† The accounts given by Edwards in his "Gangrœna," speaking of the "practice of anointing the sick with oil, in Kiffin's ‡ and Hansard Knollys Churches," are confirmed by Knollys himself.§ This practice was frequently observed among the Baptists during the early period of last century, although their faith in its efficacy does not appear to have induced them to dispense with the assistance of a physician.

* "A short and plain Narrative of Mathew Coker, touching some mistakes and misrecitals in reference to his gift of Healing," &c. London, 1654. He wrote also "A Whip of small Cords to scourge Anabaptists out of the Kingdom of God, &c., &c., to clear up the way for the receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ in his glorious power, now exercised in the working of miracles, &c," 1654. Also "A prophetical Revelation," 1654. Just published in Latin.

† See Letter by Dr. Gill to Lady Conway. Domestic State Papers, 1654, January to May, No. 352, dated "Bowham, May 26th, 1654."

‡ Kiffin, it appears, in one instance anointed with oil a woman who was sick, and not finding her recover, remembered that he had not in this instance followed the Apostle's advice, to send for *the Elders of the Church*, and the next time he took his worthy co-Elder Patience, and the cure followed. "Knowls Jesse and others anointed an old blind woman at a great meeting at Aldgate, for the restoring of her sight, with the words, 'The Lord Jesus give thee sight.'" Edwards' "Gangrœna," part iii., p. 19.

§ "I resolved to take no more physic, but would apply to that holy ordinance of God, &c., James v., 14, 15. and I sent for Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Vavasor Powell, who prayed over me and anointed me with oil in the name of the Lord, and as an answer to their prayers I was perfectly healed," p. 48 of his Autobiography.

The same claims of the “gift of healing” are made in our own age,* but the calmer atmosphere in which we live causes us to regard these and similar matters as delusions, harmless if allowed to pass unnoticed.

To look down with contempt, because of these things, upon the noblest era of English History, and one in which we see the rise of ideas which were destined immeasurably to bless our own age, cannot surely be wise. We shall not prove ourselves to be more enlightened than the men of these times, by ridiculing their weaknesses, and overlooking the strength and nobility of their characters. It seems a strange world to us, but this was the world in which Fox, and those who had similar aims, moved; and if we would endeavour to understand their real character, and the real bearing of their actions, we must, by an effort of the imagination, throw ourselves into the spirit of the times.

* See “The Healing of Sickness by Scriptural Means,” London, 1875.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE
“INWARD LIGHT, LIFE, SEED,” ETC., PROMULGATED IN
ENGLAND, BY GEORGE FOX. CONTROVERSY IN AMSTERDAM
BETWEEN NITTERT OBBES AND HANS DE RYS. HANS DE
RYS ADVOCATES THE VIEWS OF CASPAR SCHWENKFELD, OF
SILESIA. SOME ACCOUNT OF SCHWENKFELD, HIS OPINIONS
AND HIS FOLLOWERS. CONNECTION BETWEEN THE FRIENDS
AND THE MENNONITES.

“Komt einer her und sagt von geist,
Der wird sehr übel abgeweist,
Und als ein kätzer hart verklaget,
Incarcirirt oder verjaget.
* * * * *
Welche nicht mit dem grösten hauffen,
Den breiten weg wollen lauffen,
Sondern nach Christi lehr sich halten,
Die sind verhaszt bey jung und alten.”

ANNA OVENA HOYERIN, of Holstein. Geistliche Poëm, p. 165.

It may be asked whether the preaching of Fox did not embody doctrines which were new among the Baptist and Independent Churches in 1648. The whole phraseology of the early tract literature of Fox and his followers, is cast in a mould which is clearly different from the style of most of the religionists of the day. The emphasis which was placed upon the words “Light,” “Life,” “Seed,” “Word,” as applied in the New Testament to the Holy Spirit, was peculiar. A consciousness that their Society had a doctrine to preach which placed the whole of the theological conceptions of their contemporaries in a new

and a clearer light, and which involved in their view the very essence of the christian religion, marks their utterances, and supports them under the bitterest persecution.

We have already seen in the views of John Smith, the introduction into England of the germ of many of the views of Fox. We now proceed to show the common origin of these views. The tracts of the General Baptists are exceedingly rare. There were points of close resemblance between the General Baptists and the Friends, but there were points in which they differed. In some of the tracts of the General Baptists there is a striking similarity in style to that of Friends, while in others there is an equally striking difference. How are we to account for this peculiarity of title and of style in the tract literature of the early Friends? How, if there was a close connection between the two religious movements, are we to account for the peculiar form in which Fox promulgated the doctrine of "Universal and Saving Light?" How are we to account for the views of Fox on baptism and the Lord's supper, which if not absolutely new in England, had certainly obtained but little acceptance? The General Baptists all held strongly to outward baptism, and the outward Lord's supper, supplementing it often by "a love-feast." They often washed each other's feet, used "the kiss of charity," as well as the imposition of hands in receiving a member; and along with their views of the purely spiritual nature of the christian religion, there was a certain leaning to the visible and outward.* They held, in opposition to the Calvinists, the doctrine of General Redemption: that Christ died for all, and not for the elect only. But, while they represented in England one school of thought which existed among the Mennonites of Amsterdam, George Fox represented another school, and one which gave a completeness and logical force

* See note at p. 252.

to their views of "general redemption." The General Baptists and the Friends were, as we have already seen, to a very large extent united in matters of doctrine, practice, and discipline. Even in minute particulars the correspondence is very striking. While there were unquestionably differences of opinion between the General Baptists and the Friends, we shall proceed to show that even these, may be traced to a controversy among the Waterlander Mennonites of Amsterdam, which commenced, about the year 1624, between the celebrated Hans de Ries and one of the teachers of the same church, Nittert Obbes, which gave rise to about thirty tracts and treatises.

Nittert Obbes wrote a pamphlet, and the editor, contrary to his wishes, gave it the following title, which greatly scandalized the brethren, and a severe controversy commenced in the church.—"A Spider Hunter very fit to brush away from some Mennonite Barns the Cobwebs,—the Silly Follies and Trifling Frivolities of Several Fanatics, Swenkfeldians, and their followers; relying upon their peculiar pretensions and inspirations and lessening the power of the written Word of God."* The result of this publication was, that Obbes was forbidden the Lord's supper, and this roused the indignation of his friends and embittered the strife. Nittert Obbes maintained that "the written Word of God, or the Gospel, wheresoever it is read or preached, is the ordinary medium, or instrument, whereby repentance, faith, and regeneration are effected,"† and that "*ONLY by way of the Holy Scriptures, God, Christ, or the Holy Ghost, reveals and imparts to us everything which we ought to know, to do, to hope, to believe for our salvation, so that*

* Amsterdam, 1625, 4to., 86 pages, not paginated, so that our quotations refer to the printer's catchwords.

† "Spider Hunter," B 4.

we do *not* obtain our conversion or our regeneration *all at once*, by an almighty, miraculous power,—immediately, without our co-operation, merely by a magical infusion of faith,—but by working out our salvation with fear and trembling.”* “In the same way as our corporeal life proceeds from natural means and subsists on them, the spiritual life of our souls proceeds and endures by natural means too, viz., by the Written Word, or the preaching of the Gospel, therefore we ought not to expect now-a-days another Word, Inspiration, or Gospel, either from heaven or from men, to build and rely upon beside the use of the written Word of God.”† “No one receives an inspiration or a revelation concerning the will of God in Christ, as far as concerns his salvation. Whoever holds the contrary, will give rise to the error, that men should consider their own fancies, dreams, and visions to be inspirations of God, as the fanatic Anabaptists did in former times.”‡ Hans de Ries, and the three oldest teachers of the congregation, maintained the opposite opinion.§ They asserted that “there is a divine inspiration, whereby the Lord Jesus, the governor and teacher of his holy church, instructs, teaches, addresses, and inspires the faithful, viz., through the Holy

* “Spider Hunter,” & 2 and & 4.

† “A plain information concerning the controversy between HANS DE RIES and NITTERT OBBES, 1628, 4to., p. 8.

‡ “Spider Hunter,” & 1.

§ In the following treatises:—1st. “Apology or justification, wherein, together with a brief and sincere account of the state of affairs between the teachers and ministers of the United Congregation, at Amsterdam, and NITTERT OBBES, is pointed out how unreasonably, untruly, and slanderously those teachers are calumniated,—composed by RENIER WYBRANDS, PETER ANDRIES, and CORNELIS CLAAS, teachers of the Word of God, in the above-named congregation.” Hoorn, 1626, 4to., 59 pages. 2nd. “Dialogue or conversation between a Neutralist and a Waterlander brother, wherein the controversy concerning the Word of God, arisen between the teachers of the United Congregation and NITTERT OBBES, is pointed out succinctly and nakedly. Serving as a

Ghost from whom they have the anointing or unction. God summons them to repentance and conversion by the written word, but besides by His Holy Spirit and this Power in Christ, and several other means," e.g. his handy-work in the whole creation, the law of nature written in the hearts of mankind, the light of conscience, the punishment of sinners, principally by good and fervent suggestions, inspirations, and incitements, by which the Holy Spirit impels the hearts of men to everything that is true, honest, and just.* He knocks at the door of our hearts,—*there* He testifies, preaches, and teaches:—(that) his *Spirit* abides also in the hearts of the faithful, and speaks and works in them whatsoever things are good, and comforts, leads and compels them, being indeed "the earnest of their inheritance."† He allowed that "we ought not to rely on dreams and inspirations, *if contrary to the written word,*" but asserted that revelations *in addition*, besides, and above the written word frequently occur, and that our sanctification is produced "in the twinkling of an eye;" and thus these inspirations proved themselves to be "trustworthy and divine, yea, if compared with the dead and barren letter of Scripture, vivid, energetic, and all sufficient."‡ To prove his assertions, he dwelt on the distinction between "the

forerunner to descry the contents of the book called '*Spider Hunter.*'" Hoorn, 1626, 4to., 15 pages. 3rd. "Dialogue on the controversy concerning the Word of God, arisen in the Waterlander Congregation at Amsterdam, published for the instruction of the simple brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ." Hoorn, 1626, 4to., 18 pages. 4th. "Discovery of the errors, misrepresentations of Holy Scripture, and various blunders contained in the book called '*Spider Hunter,*' which treats of the Word of God, written by NITTERT OBBES, together with a refutation of those errors for the glory of God, the defence of truth, the warning and edifying of all simple-hearted, published by HANS DE RIES." Hoorn, 1627, 8vo., 338 pages.

* "Discovery," p. 256 to 258.

† "Apology," p. 52.

‡ "Dialogue or Conversation, p. 12. "Apology," p. 46.

Word of God," denoting Holy Scripture, and the "Word of God" (*Logos*), as the title of Christ. "The Word of the Father, the true Light, which has life in itself, and is an *Inward Light* to blind souls, which the letter or written light is not able to do, because it is not *life*; this is only to be found in Christ, the Word of the Father.* This *Word*, called by Peter *the Seed* of regeneration, is no other than the Word described by Paul as quick and powerful.† This *Word*, which has life in itself, is *the Word* and *the Seed*.‡ The written word is corruptible. It is likewise a servant of corruption, and, consequently, not the incorruptible *Seed* of regeneration. That *Seed* is the Son of God, the *Word* of the Father, the true *Life*.§ His adversaries," he says, consider "the written word to be the seed, the medium, or instrument whereby regeneration is performed. We say, that Christ, with this Spirit and Power, is the true *Seed* of promise, the Mediator and Medium by which we are born again (2 Cor. v., 17, and Pet. i., 2, 3)."||

We shall see that this was the great controversy between the Puritans, who took the precise position of Nittert Obbes, and the followers of Fox, who occupied the position of Hans de Ries. The party of Nittert Obbes replied,¶ and it was not denied by Hans de Ries, that this was the teaching of Caspar Schwenkfeld, of Silesia. To show the exact correspondence between the views of Hans de Ries and Schwenkfeld, the party among the Mennonites represented by Nittert Obbes gave the following as a quotation from Schwenkfeld's confession:—"God begets us of his own will with the *Word of Truth*, (James i., 18.) and that *Word* is an *incorruptible Seed*. In performing our regeneration, God

* "Discovery," p. 59. † Ibid. p. 83. ‡ Ibid. p. 84. § Ibid. p. 86. || Ibid. p. 269.

¶ "Spider Hunter," A 4. "Some questions for inquiry concerning the nature and power of Holy Scripture, or the written Word of God," p. 7.

neither needs nor employs the aid or the means of any creature; but the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit brings this work about in the soul *immediately*. The new creature that is born of God wants no outward scripture, neither creature, nor *ordinance of the outward Church*, to rely on or to deal with, for he has three witnesses in himself, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. Consequently there is a double Word of God, the one external, the other internal. The internal is the Eternal Word of the Spirit; but the external is a perishable ‘*word*,’ and the *letter* both as to power and nature; and they differ more than soul and body, death and life, Creator and creature. The former consists of a divine nature and essence, and heavenly things, but the latter, viz., the Scripture or written word, is essentially an earthly, perishable thing, and though it is used in spiritual matters, it has nevertheless from its own nature, neither spirit, nor life, but is merely a writing, a sound, or a voice,—yea, a dead, perishable creature, without any power, or gift of grace.”* Nittert Obbes died in 1630, and the controversy ended.

Schwenfeld is termed by Dr. Dorner, in his “History of Protestant Theology,” “the noblest representative of the theoretical mysticism of the age of the Reformation.” “He maintained,” Dr. Dorner says, “the unity and completeness of Christ, as distinctly as the true humanity,

* “Spider Hunter,” from c 4 to d 4.—I have not succeeded in identifying these passages in “Schwenfeld’s Confession,” in the connection in which they are here placed, and my impression is that they are quotations taken out of their natural sequence for controversial purposes. I have, however, identified the latter part of the quotation in Schwenfeld’s “Catechismus vom wort des Creützes vom Wort Gottes,” p. 566,—1st part of Schwenfeld’s Works, Edition, 1st Title, 1564; 2nd Title, 1562—which I translate thus:—“Now in short, there is (in the sense in which it is commonly spoken of) a double Word of God, namely, *an inward*, eternal, and spiritual Word, and *an outward* and perishable word of the Scriptures or letter. These two, although they often come into a spiritual relation among believers, and in

and objected to the scholastic view of the person of Christ, as separating his person too much from the person of God. His views of the divinity of Christ and of the glory of his person, were set forth with great power and eloquence. His spiritual views of the christian religion are free from any trace of pantheistic teaching. He does not detract in the smallest degree from the inspiration or authority of Holy Scripture, but he maintained against

the *Apostolic Office or Service were united*, yet they are, according to their substance, power, and nature, more completely separated than body and soul, death and life, Creator and creature, yes, they are farther apart than heaven and earth. For the former Word stands in the order of the heavenly and spiritual things, of that Divine, Eternal Existence, and is of divine quality, omnipotent, active, and powerful, yes, as I have before said, it is the heart of God himself, Spirit, and Life. But the latter word stands in the order of earthly things of this transient existence, and it testifies even from the first, that although it is used in spiritual and divine matters for the service of Christ, yet it is according to its nature and substance neither Spirit nor Life, but writing, sound, and voice; indeed it is in itself flesh, without grace, dead, and outwardly a perishable creature." It will be seen that this is quoted in the controversy so as to make Schwenkfeld as *unorthodox as possible, and as if he denied the inspiration of the Apostolic writers*; while in the quotation and elsewhere, it will be seen that he fully admits this Apostolic inspiration as entirely distinct. Schwenkfeld is contending against the Lutherans, who used the expression the "Word of God" as equivalent to the Holy Scriptures, and did not fully recognize that the Holy Spirit is termed in Scripture "the Word of God," and that the expression as applied to the Scriptures (if convenient) is a source of confusion, and strictly speaking, incorrect. Bishop Thirlwall, in a charge given in 1864, says, "'The Word of God' cannot in any passage of the New Testament be substituted for the Bible, without manifest absurdity. And what Scripture nowhere enjoins and hardly allows, a Church or an individual must be very bold to assert without reserve or qualification. The Word of God is the Divine effluence which visited the patriarchs; which inspired the prophets; which spake by the evangelists and apostles; which is uttered and expressed in all forms of revelation and of reason; which in its highest sense is applied by St. John to the Eternal Son." In his "Catechismus von Ettichen Haupt Artickelen des Christlichen glauben, &c. Auf Frag und Antwort gestellet, 1530," Schwenkfeld says, in answer to the question, pages p 3, 4 and 5, "How may I know if I stand in faith? Answer.—If thou lovest Jesus Christ from thy heart, and truly confessest with the mouth that He is the Lord whom thou seekest and honorest, and believest in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou wilt be saved.—Rom. x. . . . A man may subscribe the 12 articles, sing or speak of God, &c., &c., and yet not be a christian. . . . In

Luther, that the divine nature could not be communicated to the soul by the material or written Word, or by the material elements of the Lord's supper, without the living agency of Christ acting immediately on the soul in the person of His Holy Spirit; precisely as God created the worlds out of nothing, just so He creates and maintains the Seed of eternal life, the new creature, in the soul of man."

Luther on the other hand, in his controversy with

fine, a true faith makes out of an old man, a new; it turns the mind from earthly things to heavenly; brings with it a true hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God; brings men to exercise themselves in good works, so that they go on from faith to faith, from love to love, from clearness to clearness, in the knowledge of God, that they ever go forward and grow. Faith is from the hearing of the Word of God, but not from the hearing *alone* of the *outward word*, but from that of the *inward living Word*; the Holy Ghost himself preaches in all elect hearts.—From the outward word *alone* is no rightly created or enduring faith." In his "Deutche Theologia für die Leien, Works," p. 606, he says, "The new birth is such a work of God, that in it the dead is made alive; the spotted cleansed; the corrupted amended; the lost brought back again. In it, all the old godless existence is washed away, in the name (that is the power) of the Lord Christ, and of His Spirit, in the heavenly water in which the old creature is renewed in heart and spirit, and rises out of it a new man, a new creature. . . . (p. 608). Although outward things, such as the office of preacher, the Holy Scriptures, sacraments, church order, prayer, and other matters, as they proceed in grace may serve the purpose of, and further the end of, the new birth and the renewal of the heart in man, yet, nevertheless, no *outward thing* or element can produce, or give, the new birth. For this comes from above and is peculiar to the Lord Christ, and nothing foreign is added to it which is not of his divine nature. Of the water of the new birth, I have written elsewhere.—Peter also, Chap. i., calls it *the Seed* of the living Word of God, and in James it is called the 'Word of Truth.'" He shows also in his "Catechismus vom Wort des Crelitzes," (p. 569, Werken) "that God's Word is *the Seed* of all the children of God. God's word manifest in the flesh, even Christ, is the single corn of wheat, which after it fell into the earth and died, brought forth much fruit. It is the everlasting, unpublished, living *Seed* which fell into the good ground," &c., &c. He goes on to show that this Word is "Bread, Water, Spirit, and not letter," and that it is "*Life* and *Light*." "This 'Word,' in the unconverted, was 'the voice of Jesus Christ in the heart.' The preachers and servants of Christ testify of such a Word; a Word of faith, a Word by which we hear God, a Word of Life, of which it is written, (1 John i, Rom. x. and Col. i.) 'which is Christ in you,' says Paul, 'in it is the hope of glory,' which we explain," &c. "Deutche Theologia für die Leien," p. 629.

Carlstadt and the Zwickau Baptists, had maintained the extreme position that "God has resolved to give no one the inward things save through the outward; not to give the Spirit and faith save through the outward word and sign."* Luther attacked Carlstadt with all the power of argument and satire, which he knew so well how to use, in the words, "Ah, how scornfully and mockingly he dips again into the Spirit; yes, he says, 'shall a handful of water indeed make one pure from sin? The Spirit, the Spirit, the Spirit must do it inwardly. Shall bread and wine help me? Shall the breathing over the bread bring Christ into the sacrament? No, no, the flesh of Christ must be eaten spiritually. The Wittenbergers know nothing about it. They steal faith out of the letter.' And many splendid words are used, so that whoever does not know the devil might think they had five Holy Spirits in them! If they are asked, how do I come into the possession of such a sublime spirit? they point thee, not to the outward gospel, but to the Land of the Sluggards,† tell thee to 'stand for a long while as I have stood,' and thus thou wilt learn. Then will the heavenly Voice come, and God himself will speak with thee. If thou askest more about

* "Widder die hymelichen propheten von den bildern und Sacraments," &c., Wittenberg, Martinus Luther. Second part, p. 4. 1525.

† "Schlauraffen Land" is thus described at this period, and Kingsley has described it in much the same way in our own—

Eine Gegend heizt Schlauraffenland
Den faulen leuten wollbekant,
Die liegt drei Meilen hinter Weihnachten,
Ein mensch der dahinein will trachten,
Muss sich des groszen Dings vermessan,
Und durch einen Berg von Kuchen essen
Der ist wol dreier Meilen dick,
Alsdann ist er im augenblick
In demselbigen Schlauraffenland.

* * * * *

this waiting, they know about it as much as Dr. Carlstadt of the Greek and Hebrew languages! Seest thou there the Devil, the enemy of divine order, how he makes thy mouth gape at the words ‘Spirit, Spirit, Spirit,’ and yet, the while, is tearing away the bridges, plank, road, ladder, and everything by which the Spirit is come to thee, viz., the outward ordinances of God in bodily baptism, sign, and word from God’s mouth, by which the Spirit is seeking to teach thee, not how the Spirit is to come to thee, but how *thou art to come to the Spirit.*” (They say) “that thou shalt ‘learn to go upon the clouds and ride upon the wind,’ yet do not tell thee *how or when, where or what*, but that thou shalt learn thyself as they have learnt!”

This quotation will give us an idea of the stormy times in which Caspar Schwenkenfeld’s lot was cast. If we duly consider this, we shall agree that his character was one of the most beautiful which that eventful period produced. He maintained the gentleness and purity of the christian character as described in the Gospel, at a time when Luther fiercely attacked christian men, and treated them as inspired by the Devil, because they differed from him in opinion, and expressed their views with learning and

Auch fliegen um, das mögt ihr glauben
Gebratene Hühner Gäns und Tauben,
Wer sie nicht fängt und ist so faul
Dem fliegen sie selbst in das maul !
* * * * *
Verstand darf man nicht lassen sehn,
Aller Vernunft musz man müssig gehn :
Wer Sinn und Witz gebrauchen wolt.
* * * * *
Wer Zucht und Ehrbarkeit hält lieb
Denselben man des Lands vertrieb !
Und wer arbeitet mit der hand
Dem verböt man, das Schlauroffenland !

By Hans Sachs, born 1494.

ability; when Zwingle did not raise his voice against the drowning of Anabaptists; and when, at a later period, Calvin also delivered men over to fearful punishments, for the sole crime of confuting his peculiar theological views.

Schwenkfeld was a Silesian nobleman. He was born in 1490, at Ossig, in the Lübner kreise, in Lower Silesia. He studied for two years at the University of Cologne and at other universities. When he came to his majority he took a place at court, at first with Duke Charles of Münsterberg, a grandson of king Podiebrand of Bohemia, then he lived at Brieg, and finally he was for many years with the Duke Frederick the Second of Liegnitz, in the position of aulic counsellor. While Schwenkfeld was at Münsterberg he became acquainted with the views of John Huss,* which were strongly represented at Court. He was also a great admirer of Tauler, whose works he had studied for twenty years. The noble conduct of Luther, at Worms, was the turning point in his life. He reproached himself that his religion had not hitherto been the religion of the heart. In 1521 therefore he returned to private life, and studied the Holy Scriptures "day and night."

About the year 1525 he openly espoused the cause of the Reformation, and went to Wittenberg to converse personally with Luther. The result of his conference with this Reformer and Dr. Bugenhagen, was the full conviction that he differed entirely from Luther on the

* John Huss became acquainted with John Wickliff's opinions by means of the circumstance that a German student, who had studied at the University at Oxford, brought to the University at Prague, Wickliff's book "De Universalibus Realibus," which he had bought in England "as a treasure," and shared it with his friend. Huss at Prague University, in his preaching to the people, praised John Wickliff, and said "that when he departed this life he should wish to be where John Wickliff was." "Historia Alberti Krantz von den Alten Hussen zu Behmen in Keiser Sigismunds zeiten," 1523, pp. 4 and 5. This is in the Author's possession.

subjects of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and also that he could not acknowledge any confessions of faith as sufficient, except in so far forth as they agreed with Holy Scripture.

There was also another point of divergence in their views. In harmony with the Duke of Liegnitz, who still valued Schwenkfeld's advice, he held that the Reformation should proceed from *within* outwardly, and not *from without* inwardly. In other words, they disagreed with the Lutheran party in their policy of linking the Reformed Church with the State. Schwenkfeld's first work, written about 1524, and dedicated to the Duke of Liegnitz, "On the misuse of the Gospel for the security of the flesh," procured him small thanks from the Lutheran party. For when Schwenkfeld saw, that although Luther attacked the errors of the Papacy, an improvement in life did not in most cases follow the reception of the new doctrine, he found himself compelled to take up a somewhat different position. He said that "the Lutherans had only the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, and had yet much to learn. They were forming a church by *the power and command of the magistrate*, and did not attempt to gather a church which was first 'formed by Christ's Spirit.'"

Schwenkfeld maintained that at first Luther had held the same views as himself as to the spiritual nature of true faith, of the impossibility of understanding the things of God, or the Holy Scriptures, excepting by the direct or immediate influence of the Holy Spirit.* He held that the

* He quoted Luther on the 1 Pet. i., to prove this. Luther says, "through faith alone and not *through anything which is outward*, call it as you may, God makes the heart pure." Again, in the preface to the "Magnificat," Luther says, "*no one can understand God or God's word, unless he has it (immediately) without means from the Holy Ghost, and no one has it unless he experiences and has a sense of it, and in the same experience the Holy Ghost teaches as in his own school.*"

Lutherans did not make a sufficient distinction between "an historical faith," and a "justifying faith." They know Christ, he says, "after the letter, after his historical teaching, miracles and deeds, not as *He is to-day, living and working.*" He said that the followers of Luther made justification by faith too much an outward thing, rather as if God "reckoned" people "righteous" whose souls were not made to some extent really and *essentially* righteous; they treated the matter, not in the sense of a deep and radical spiritual change, but "as if they had just bought an indulgence" from Christ instead of the Pope! They appeared to think that "God would say to us when we die, or at the Judgment Day, 'Come hither ye wicked people to heaven, on account of Christ my Son!'" As if we might safely 'remain wicked,' and yet 'be reckoned just and acceptable still, on account of faith in Christ.'* On this account the Lutherans strove so little after *true repentance* and the *improvement of their life*, and thus the *sanctification of the Spirit, the renewal of mind, the right gentleness of Christ*, as also the new birth, good works, and repentance are darkened, that I do not say altogether taken out of the way. When *God* justifies, He does not act as men act with men alone. He does not merely forgive and present to man his sins and absolve him from his guilt, but God makes him *better*. He gives him the Holy Spirit, which cleanses his heart by the love of Christ, so that man now desires what is good and right, and what he desires is *brought to good effect.*"

* In "Ableinung und veranthwortung der neun Calumnien so etlich widersprecher der Glorien Christi in Schlesien aus Caspar Schwenfelds, Buch," &c., 1562, p. 16, a quotation is given from "C. S. Worte Gottes," fol. 129, which gives this view of the nature of the change in "justification."—"That the elect are not esteemed justified before God *entirely* through an imputation or reckoning of them just, but are *made in deed just*, and that the Lord God Jesus Christ is our righteousness, not as *He is* outwardly believed in, but when *He works, lives, and is enjoyed in us by faith.*

When the dispute respecting the sacraments arose between Luther and Zwingli, Luther (Schwenkfeld maintains) shifted his ground, and held that what was "*outward*" must go before the *inward*, and that the inward would follow, because Christ had placed the power and *might* of His sufferings in the *visibility* of the Sacrament, &c."* Schwenkfeld held that Luther's first views were correct, and that the *inward change* must come before the outward things of Christianity could be rightly used, and foresaw clearly the infinite mischief which *the working out of the opposite principle would effect in the Church and State.*

Schwenkfeld did not himself partake of the Lord's Supper. He did not exactly forbid his followers to do so, but held that there could be no right participation in it, until, by the operation of a Church discipline unbelievers could be separated from the Church. The Lord's Supper, he said, was *not* kept, where people merely go outwardly to receive it. "Those who from grace can desire such a thing in their *inmost* prayers, *they* may find themselves *where they wish*, and the true Lord's Supper will be kept through faith inwardly in the soul, yea, in heaven,—where the eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, invites the believing table guests unto holiness,—and it is bound to no outward thing, whether here or there. As often as a man receives *divine sweetness in Christ*, so often he keeps the Lord's Supper with Christ. We shall also strive that we may keep it daily with Him."

He disapproved of infant baptism, but did not agree with the Baptists as to the importance of adult baptism. "Just as the Lutherans drive *them* to the Lord's Supper, so *they* drive the conscience to their outward baptism. Thus the *outward*, in the secrets of God, treads over all, and the letter

* "Weil Christus die Kraft und Macht seines Leidens hätte in das Sichtbarlichkeit im Sacrament gelegt."

has the rule. With regard to baptism, your exercise and prayer to God should be, that you *inwardly*, in your heart, soul, and conscience, should be rightly baptized, and sprinkled, and cleansed with the precious blood of Christ which was poured out on account of our sins, that you may become born again in the overpouring* of the heavenly water; that your heart may be more and more changed by the consideration of what is above, and that you increase in the love of God and your neighbour, and that you receive the Holy Spirit, which is the true baptism of God, while the outward is the sign. When we have understood faith rightly, and clasp it to our hearts, with the ornament of love, *we have baptism and the Lord's Supper, and all*, for in Him is the fulness."

In "Johan Werner's Catechism," with a preface by Schwenkfeld, the question is asked, "Is the breaking of bread also needful to salvation?" The answer is thus put, "The bread of life is necessary to salvation, and nothing *outward*, for 'one thing is needful.'" While it is obvious that the followers of Schwenkfeld did not consider the appointment of an outward meal, so that the true disciples of Christ should specially remember the Lord's death other than a proper christian practice, the teaching of Schwenkfeld that the spiritual eating of the Lord's Supper is not "tied to such outward eating and drinking," and also his personal example, left the matter open for each person to act according to his conscientious convictions. In 1718, George Hauptman, one of his followers, says he "*has not recommended* any one to take the Lord's Supper, but will pray and call upon the Lord to come into his

* Baptism was then administered by the Baptists, not by immersion, but by pouring water over the head of the person.

heart and sup with him;" and it is *clear that Schwenkfeld's followers did not use the outward ordinance of the Lord's Supper.**

We now see that the teaching of Schwenkfeld and Fox was identical on three important points. First, on what is called the doctrine of the "Inward Light, Life, Word, Seed, &c." Secondly, on "Immediate Revelation;" that is, that God and Christ in the person of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, communicates with the human soul without the absolute necessity of the rites and ceremonies of the church or of any outward *means*, acts, or things, however important they may be; and that the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, creating and upholding what is termed in Scripture the "new birth," the "new man," or the "new creature," is absolutely necessary to the very idea of a man being a true christian; that, however essential, necessary, or desirable a knowledge of divine things, and even of Holy Scripture may be, without the presence of the life-giving Spirit of Christ, it is a dead and comparatively profitless thing. They did not maintain that the preaching of the Gospel, the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures, the action of the visible church in the use of outward means, or of anything which Christ had commanded to be done, was other than obligatory, but that in the use of right means the presence and living power of the Holy Spirit, and a vital change in the soul was to be sought, and was needful to give a saving faith. In a word, one party was insisting on the necessity of faith in the Father and the Son, and the other insisted that faith in the Holy Ghost was needful to give effect to faith in the

* See "Kurtz und Einfältiges Bekäntnitz der hiesigen in Görlitz dolerirten Schwenkfeldern," 1726; reprinted in "Kadelbach," Geschichte, p. 143. See side note, "Warrum sie das heilige abendmahl nicht gebrauchen wollen." See also note p. 244.

two first persons of the Trinity. Thirdly, that as a necessary consequence, no merely bodily act, such as partaking of the Lord's Supper or baptism, can give the inward and spiritual reality and power of the Lord's "body" and "blood," or that of the spiritual "washing of regeneration;" nor can the soul be maintained in spiritual union with Him by bodily acts.* As a practical inference, Schwenkfeld held that "no preacher, who is not a pious man and who does not live a holy life, is able to preach the Gospel of Christ before God savingly and fruitfully, because a godless man

* The following is from the "Inquisitio de Verbo Dei an sit in pane Eucharistie et aquâ Baptismatis," 1526, by Valentine Cratwald, an intimate friend and follower of Schwenkfeld. This rare and severely logical treatise is in the author's possession. His opponents suppose that some mixture of outward and spiritual nutrition or washing exists in the Lord's Supper and Baptism, but he contends that the two things are as diverse as body and soul. "Ministers," he says, "will find that it is impossible, except by the Incarnate Word of God, to satisfy the hungry—*by* the Word of God, and *from* the Word of God, without any medium of outward bread; and that it is not possible for defiled consciences to be cleansed, except by the washing of water, by the Word (from the Word Himself without the application of outward water)." "Among other things, also, they will observe that the body of Christ in the Supper is not in the bread, nor is it brought by it or with it into souls, but is in the Word, and is the body of the Word of God. And, at the same time, they will observe, that in baptism the cleansing water is in the font of the Word, but that the Word is not in the fontal water." (Marginal note)—"There is no other 'Sacrament' than the Word of God—that is, Christ." But if they say that this thing cannot be understood by reason, but ought to be *believed*, among many things, we shall reply:—Although for the understanding of the thing we are perhaps rather dull, yet because the effect of the thing neither appears nor has been openly described anywhere in the Sacred Writings, we are not bound to believe a thing without an effect, and an effect without a Scripture to prove the reality of the fact. For what does the body of Christ thus effect in the bread? Where is the certainty of faith? &c., which, indeed, shows that we do not yet sufficiently grasp the true principle of sacraments and signs, and the pure institution of Christianity, and that there is need of elementary teaching; but, above all, *that the Lord would unite His Church, and enduing it with power, would guide it by His own exalted Spirit, whom may the Father in Heaven give to all who ask, through Jesus Christ his Son. Amen.*" The whole argument in this treatise is substantially that of the Early Friends, against Sacramental theories. The words in the Gospel respecting the Lord's Supper, Schwenkfeld explained thus against Luther:—"My body, which will be given for you, is, for example, what the broken,

can teach nothing aright, and because his preaching does not then come from God.”*

The controversy between Luther and Zwingle was raging in 1525, when Schwenkfeld had his interview with Luther. Schwenkfeld found that his view concerning the sacraments resembled Zwingle’s, and he and his learned friend Valentine Crautwalt wrote books and letters on the subject, which were widely circulated. The whole of the clergy in Liegnitz were of the same opinion, and by his advice what was called the “ Still stand ” respecting the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, took place ; in other words, it was generally disused in Liegnitz and other places in Silesia. Luther † did not immediately condemn this state of things, but advised them “ to let others deal with it (the controversy) who are sure in their consciences ; ” but warned them that the Papists were already “ rejoicing in this event.” The Reformation in Liegnitz differed from the Reformation in Breslau only in this point, viz., that baptism and the Lord’s Supper were for the present waived.

Up to this time the Duke of Liegnitz was advised by Schwenkfeld, but the course of things was narrowly

eaten bread is.” Christ has not said—this do for the forgiveness of sins, for the strengthening of faith, and for the vanquishing of the Devil ; but, “ this do in remembrance of Me.” The Lord’s will is that men should keep *feast and holiday*, to consider the benefit they have received from Himself and his Cross, through which He became the food of eternal life, that they should remember Him, should give Him thanks and praise for it, and should show forth His death, and exercise brotherly love. *Christ*, however, I hold to be the Bread of Life”—“ I am the living bread which comes down from heaven.”

* “ Ableitung der neun Calumnien,” &c., 1562, p. 28, and again, “ Kein heuchler noch gottloser Predicant,” &c. The Lutherans, they say, held “ Jeder Clamant und Polderer der auf die Cathedram steigt,” sey “ Ein Diener Gottes Worts.” The Lutheran preachers “ held up the lantern instead of the Light !” p. 32.

† Page 3 of the “ Hymlichen propheten,” part ii.

watched by the Lutheran party; and when Schwenkfeld advised the Duke to treat the Anabaptists in Silesia with mildness, instead of extirpating them, it was rumoured that he contemplated introducing this "wild plant," and with it all kinds of "miracles," &c. While the Reformation in Liegnitz was thus proceeding quietly and successfully, by "the mild sword of the Spirit, instead of weapons and iron," the Emperor Ferdinand interfered, and the Duke of Liegnitz at last perceived that he was becoming separated from the Reformed party in other parts of Europe, and that he would be compelled either to expel or to punish Schwenkfeld, to pacify the all powerful Protestant clergy.

Schwenkfeld therefore left Liegnitz, 7th February, 1529,* with the treasure of "a good conscience." He then travelled to Ulm, Augsburg, Nürnberg, and Strasburg, and was engaged in controversy with some of the principal Reformers. He disputed with the clergy. He attended many German courts, and everywhere won disciples, particularly from higher and most learned classes. Although he did not aim at founding a sect, his views obtained so much notice, that he was denounced both by the Protestant and Catholic clergy as an arch-heretic, enthusiast, chimeramaster, &c. He was forbidden, in the year 1531, the free exercise of religion, after a trial by the spiritual authorities at Tübingen, although sentence was not pronounced against him. He was at last separated entirely from the Reformers by a letter of excommunication from Luther, in reply to a tract of Schwenkfeld's, which had been sent him, in which he expressed the opinion that Schwenkfeld was inspired by

* Page 20, "Schneider's Verlaß der Reformation in Liegnitz," Berlin, 1862. For this date, see also p. 3 of "Leben's Beschreibung of Caspar Schwenkfeld," 1897, in author's possession.

the devil, and that he and his followers, the "Sacramentarii and Eutychiani," were running swiftly to perdition. But he received this, and the most bitter sayings of his opponents, with a Christian gentleness, which was a striking proof of the depth and power of his religious character.

"It is sad to me that they are striving against the living Christ and His Spirit. We will sincerely pray to God for them; for it will at last come to this, that they and we shall one day *all* have to acknowledge our foolishness before our master, Christ." His greatest enemies were compelled to acknowledge his worth, his piety, and his holy life; and he endeared himself to all by his modesty and friendly carriage. In the bitterest theological strife he disused all the violent epithets of the times. He aimed at disarming his theological adversaries, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. "We are not *masters* in the things of God, but scholars in Christ's school. He is our Master." "I do not give myself out for a master, I am only a poor scholar of the Lord, who well knows my weakness and foolishness." "Dear children," he wrote to a friend, "let us live a life rejoicing in God; let us walk in this world in piety, truth, and uprightness, and love Jesus Christ from the heart."

He wrote ninety distinct works. They were classed with the works of the Anabaptists, and were destroyed by both the Papists and Lutherans. At Muhlhausen, and elsewhere, a printer's whole stock, and a bookseller's whole shop, were destroyed, in order to be sure that such "poison should not go among the people!" "Because," says Schwenkfeld, "I did not say that *everything they said was good*, they raised such a cry of 'murder,' and charged me with fearful errors and heresies that never came into my mind!" He was persecuted by the clergy, because they conceived that a layman, however learned, had

no right to intrude into their province to preach and teach Christianity. When his enemies had the upper hand, he lay concealed “in hedges, in outhouses, and hidden caves,” and was often “out in the rain and storm.” But he says, “My good, true Lord has given me, among strangers, many brethren and sisters; in some cases, even amongst the nobility.”

Weary, and worn in mind and body, he was taken ill at his trusty countryman’s, Jacob Meretzke, of Iägendorf. Agatha Streicher begged him to come to Ulm, to be better cared for, and he died in Streicher’s house, on 10th December, 1561, aged seventy-one years, in the most perfect trust in his Saviour, for whom he had so long fearlessly striven, and entered at last into heaven, his true Fatherland. He is said to have used for his motto, “Nil Christo triste recepto”—“When Christ is received, nothing is sad;” and it was realized in his life and character. By means of his works, and his teaching, a circle of earnest Christians was formed all over Germany, but particularly in Suabia and Silesia, who had their own meetings, and who separated themselves from the religion of their States, under the name of “Confessors, or Followers of the Glory of Christ.” He did not, however, recognize any following of himself, but “a holding to Christ our Head.” “It is not agreeable to me,” he said, “that you should be called after me.” He did not consider himself an enlightened prophet, or having any Apostolic revelation to impart, but always maintained the most modest views of himself, and his position as a simple Christian teacher. It is reckoned* that Schwenkfeld’s followers numbered during his life from 4,000 to 5,000, scattered all over Germany.

* By Dr. Schneider.

Such was the effect of the teaching of this eminent layman, that when in 1547, his followers were ordered to leave Silesia, and were persecuted and imprisoned, and all the writings of Schwenkfeld, Crautwald, and Werner were ordered to be delivered up, it was found that the pious life of his followers, the punctuality with which they paid their rent, and fulfilled the duties of citizens, were greatly missed, and the authorities connived at their return. The Thirty Years' War interrupted the persecution in Silesia. It was probably at this period that many emigrated to Holland, and some to England. "They were destroyed," Erbkam says, "throughout the whole of Germany, but some remained in Suabia and Silesia." In 1719, under the patronage of the Emperor of Germany, a Jesuit mission was established in Silesia. A systematic persecution of these poor Christian people began. Some joined the Protestant churches, some fled to Saxony, where they were protected by Count Zinzendorf.* In 1734, forty Schwenkfeldian families travelled to England, and finally emigrated to Pennsylvania, where they have maintained their existence as a distinct religious body to the present day; a letter from the ministers of this interesting community is inserted, which furnishes important corroboration to the author's statement, as to the practices of the Schwenkfeldian Churches. They now number 300 families (800 persons), and have two Churches.† With

* An ancestor of the founder of "The Moravian Brethren," amongst whom John Wesley sojourned, and where he obtained the views of spiritual religion which Schwenkfeld had so long ago taught; and under the spiritual ministrations of one of the Moravians, Wesley, it will be remembered, was converted.

†

"Colebrookdale, Berks County, Pennsylvania,
November 22nd, 1875.

"To ROBERT BARCLAY, England.

"Dear Friend,—We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd of August, and regret that we cannot more satisfactorily reply to your inquiries as to the differences (if any) between the teachings of Caspar Schwenkfeld and that of

reference to the religious worship of the followers of Schwenkfeld, we give Caspar Schwenkfeld's answer to the question, in his own words—"Whether we also have a

George Fox. The 'Journal' of the latter is not in our possession, neither have we any evidence that, as early as 1630, or earlier, any of the followers of Schwenkfeld emigrated to Amsterdam; nor that at any time Hans de Rys's Congregation existed there; neither do we have any information to the contrary.

"Judging from the brief notices of the teachings of George Fox in our possession, we have reason to believe that they did not differ materially from those of Schwenkfeld; and among the followers of both, here in America, there is a striking similarity, in the almost total absence of formalities and ceremonies in their religious practices. Both are discarding judicial oaths, carnal weapons, and are unostentatious in dress.

"Notwithstanding the fact that the Friends are of English descent, having their books, worship, and conversation in the English language, and the followers of Schwenkfeld here all of it in German, yet there always existed a lively sympathy, love, and esteem between the parties.

"You wish to obtain some work that would show the religious practices and principles we have adopted in America. For that purpose we send your 'Compendium of Christian Doctrines of Faith,' which, together with the 'Catechism and Constitution' contained in 'Kadelbach's History' in your possession, may suffice. It is, however, proper to mention the fact that *neither in Europe nor here, have the followers of Schwenkenfeld at any time administered Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*

"Owing to the persecutions which prevailed from 1630 to 1640, the religious practices of our ancestors in Germany about that period, were chiefly confined to meeting in private houses for prayer and admonition, and in endeavours in the daily walk of life to imitate as much as possible the example of the Heavenly Master.

"In the love of Christ, sincerely your friends,

"GEORGE MESCHTER,

"WILLIAM SCHULTZ,

"JACOB MESCHTER.

'December 17th, 1875, Colebrookdale, Penna.'

"Per Dan. S. SCHULTZ.

This letter was written in English. In a subsequent communication, D. S. Schultz states that their actual membership is 500, and that these constitute two congregations, principally located in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Each congregation has three ministers, and they have three meeting-houses. Both congregations are under one Church government. At their Annual Conference and elections, all male members have a voice.

separate assembly or congregation, and by what means our brotherhood is bound together?"—in the foot-note below, which gives an exact and most important account of Schwenkfeld's teaching, and the practices of his followers.*

* "We have no gathered, separated assembly ('*cætus*'), or church. You ask, *How* also our (people) who hold or love this teaching of Christ and his glory (of which we know little enough, and which is so strongly spoken against) are still, though dispersed, gathered in the spirit of grace? We separate ourselves in our course of life and communion from *no one who loves Christ and lives righteously*. He may be from whatever side he may, because we know that God has his own in all parties, who, without doubting, acknowledge the truth (either secretly or afterwards more clearly); who repent and live according to Christ's teaching. But what concerns the outward ceremonial and divine service (*i.e.*, established by the law), this we cannot perform, for we consider it idolatrous and wrong; as, for instance, on the Roman Catholic side, the Mass; and on the Protestant side, the Lord's Supper, which they do not receive from the heart. We seek Christ not *below* in the sacramental bread, but *above* in heaven—Coloss. iii." (see above for the rest of C. Schwenkfeld's teaching on this point). "We have no gathered church or society; on this account, also, we cannot dispense the sacrament." He states that "a church discipline, how ministers are to be examined, their confirmation and placing, respecting excommunication," &c., "has not been opened to them." "When we come together, we pray with one another; for our enemies, that Christ will turn their heart, and set up his kingdom, and the increase of the number of the faithful; we teach and also converse with one another, and ask questions respecting Christ, and afterwards in writing respecting the Divine Trinity, the kingdom of God," &c. We busy ourselves also with the right understanding and exposition of Holy Scripture according to the mind of the Spirit. We much enjoy prayer and other exercises in Christ, through the revelation of his Spirit. Our union consists in no ceremonies, but alone in the teaching of the knowledge of Christ as described in his double offices, with all those who acknowledge and believe our teaching (this, however, is not ours, but that of the Lord Christ and His Spirit) respecting the Divine truth in their hearts, 'Christ with us'—the true, naturally born Son of God, and acknowledge Him in these His two natures in personal unity, &c. We hope, also, that the Lord Christ, through this pure, sound teaching, by his blessed knowledge (because it comes to us by His Divine revelation in the Holy Ghost) will build a Church out of the world, and gather together in one the children of God which are scattered abroad; and will, when the appointed time comes, impart to, and pour out upon it, greater and more noble gifts than we poor people have, to his praise and glory. We cannot however await here upon earth an 'Aureum Seulum,' or Golden World.* Our hope is to enjoy the perfect knowledge of God, and shall have it *here* in our Fatherland. All this we acknowledge alone in part and piece meal (stuck weise), as Paul says, and he receives only the first fruits of the Spirit through Christ, till that which is perfect is come. We acknowledge

* This probably refers to the idea of the Baptists, that Christ's personal reign was shortly to be expected.

Dr. Schneider* informs us : "They gathered weekly, generally at the house of one of the elders. They sang first, out of the hymn-book of the Bohemian Brethren, hymns, altered according to their religious views. Then one of the elders read a portion of Holy Scripture, according to Luther's translation, and explained the text, either himself, or by Schwenkfeld's, Hiller's, or Werner's Commentaries. At the end of their worship, a common, free prayer was made, which, according to Schwenkfeld's practice, was received *standing*. The Church festival of the Sacrament they shunned on principle. Instead of Baptism, the laying on of the hands of the elders, or the midwife's baptism of extremity, contented them. Marriages were performed by the laying on of the hands of the elders. When they were persecuted, each father of a family performed Divine worship, or, if this was dangerous, they sought "the Bush." They were generally buried as common criminals—"ohne Sang noch Klang." They were often persecuted on account of their very appearance ; their "Quaker-like attire" soon showed who they were. Among them were to be found peasants, gardeners, weavers, professional men of all kinds, apothecaries, general shopkeepers, and even soldiers." †

no reformation or improvement of the Christian religion and teaching, except the true knowledge of Christ—that which is according to the Holy Ghost—which must be expected, not alone out of the Scriptures, but much more from the gifts of Grace revealed by the Father; yet so that this revelation should always *be in unison with, and unite with the witness of the Scriptures, &c.* Amen.

"CASPAR SCHWENKFELDIUS,
"Subscriptis."

Pages 59 to 62 of his Collected Works, 1st Title, 1564 ; 2nd Title, 1562.

* Pages 3 and 4 of his "Geschichtlichen Verlauf du Reformation in Liegnitz," part ii.

† In 1782, it was ordered in their new church constitution, that they were *not longer* to be soldiers.

The views of Schwenkfeld respecting Church membership were identical with those of the Baptists. With regard to the relations of the ministry to the Church, his views, as we have seen, were quite unformed, and they remained in the same position among his followers till long after the rise of the Society of Friends in England.

We shall now readily see that the controversy among the Mennonites, in 1725, explains how the opinions of Caspar Schwenkfeld were adopted by a considerable party in the Waterlander Mennonite Church of Amsterdam; and that this again enables us to understand, not only how it is we find among the Early Friends the elaborate Church discipline of the Mennonites, their practice of silent worship, of silent thanksgiving before meals,* their testimony against all war and oaths, and a variety of minute coincidences of practice, which the reader will have already observed.

It enables us also to explain how all this was combined with the theology of Caspar Schwenkfeld, and how it was that outward Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which were *zealously observed* by the Dutch Mennonites and the General Baptists, were *disused* as outward ordinances among the Friends. But this is not all—the general points of Christian teaching insisted upon by Fox, correspond in minute particulars with the teaching of Caspar Schwenkfeld. Does not this clearly show the way in which the "Doctrine of the Light," associated with the

* To the best of the writer's knowledge, "silent worship," and the silent prayer before meals (which were both coincident with the rise of the Society which Fox formed), were *not practised* by any religionists of the Commonwealth times so as to be noticed and commented on by historians. On the other hand, the doctrines taught by Fox correspond very closely in minute particulars with the teaching of Caspar Schwenkfeld.

doctrines and practices of the Mennonites, passed into England, and found a powerful and active exponent in George Fox ?

It is possible that Fox was unconscious of the source of these ideas. Yet we can hardly suppose the close connection of religious observances and details of Church structure which we have observed, with doctrines which were new in England and old in Holland, to have been the result of chance, or a simple result of the study of the New Testament, perfectly uninfluenced by human agency. We shall see that Fox, in the earlier period of his life and ministry, was not only brought into accidental contact, but was in constant and friendly communication with the General Baptist Churches ; and we shall the more readily understand why his teaching was so generally accepted by them.

These Churches formed a direct bridge of communication between the Waterlander Mennonite Church in Amsterdam and this country. Doubtless many of the teachers among the General Baptists were aware, that Fox was only advocating the views of the celebrated Hans de Rys and his party, and was carrying out to their legitimate conclusion the religious ideas of Schwenkfeld, which Rys had commended to their notice. Doubtless, also, there were men in England in 1648, who had engaged personally, at Amsterdam, in the controversy which we have described, fourteen or fifteen years previously to the preaching of Fox. We have, moreover, to recollect that the two original English Separatist Churches were situated on the borders of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire,* and also that direct evidence has been given in these pages, of the existence of

* There were a large number of General Baptist Churches in Lincolnshire in 1660—see King's Pamphlets.

Mennonite Baptist Churches in York and Lincoln, which were in direct communication with the Church founded by Smyth and Thomas Helwys, and were in communion with the Waterlander Mennonite Church in Amsterdam.

George Fox, very early turned his attention to Holland, and William Caton, one of the early ministers of the Society of Friends, who occupied the position of tutor at Swarthmore Hall, travelled in that country, and it was mainly among the Mennonites that he found sympathy, and the opportunity of exercising his ministry. Caton first visited Holland in 1656. Although "John Stubbs and William Ames had had good service before in Amsterdam," he does not appear to have been very extensively engaged there till 1660. He writes to Fox at Swarthmore, and states that he was allowed to preach in the Mennonite assemblies, and that they expressed their willingness to hear him, "if he had a nearer way to God," or "one which was more excellent than theirs." Visiting the Mennonite Church at Dockum, in 1660, he remarks that they "*sat as if they had been Friends,*" in "*great silence.*" He was entertained at the house of their preacher here and elsewhere. He appears to have had great acceptance among them in all things, excepting in the matter of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In Friesland, he says that they "hung exceedingly" upon their "outward, visible things," so that I am confident it was easy for the Apostle taking the sect of the Pharisees off from circumcision, offerings, temple, and the traditions of the elders, as it is for us to bring these people—"vanhetuit wendige Doopsgezinde avonmaal"—that is, from their ordinances commonly called Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and these two things they cry up, even as

* "From the outward Baptist Communion."

the Jews the temple of the Lord, and as the Gentiles did the “temple of the goddess Diana !” “These Mennonites, or Wederdoopers, are divided,” he remarks, “into seven companies,” and *each* of them “looked upon themselves as *the* spouse of Christ,” and that “*they* were the people which God had chosen out of the world,” seeing that they were not conformable to it in many things, as that they would not sprinkle their infants, nor carry arms, neither would they swear, or go to law, &c., so that many of the simplest of men run after them ;” and that if they do not belong to the Mennonites, they are “Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Brownists, or among the Collegiens,” *i.e.*, Collegianten. He begs for the prayers of the Church, saying, “And do ye but judge what *he* hath to bear that must make war against all *these*, and what need of wisdom and courage, of faith and a good understanding !”* Fox and Barclay were both aware of the existence of the Collegianten (the section of the Mennonites, who held similar views to those of the Plymouth Brethren of our days, and whom we have before described), and were interested in knowing what was stirring among them. This is shown by an original letter in the possession of the author, forming part of the Swarthmore Papers. Fox writes to Robert Barclay, of Uriel, on the 29th day of the first month, 1679. He says: “I have received thy letter, and was glad to hear from thee, and also glad to hear of something stirring among the Jews ; and it would be very well if some weighty friends would give them a visit in Holland this Yearly Meeting that is to come, and see what is stirring among the Jews, and among the *Collegions* and the ministers—(see below, date 1677)—which

* Extracted from a letter to Swarthmore Hall, 25/11/1660, found among the MSS. belonging to the author's father, and hitherto unpublished.

we had the discourse withall." Some of the Collegianten in Amsterdam were the first converts of the Friends, and William Sewell, their historian, was a Mennonite. Fox was twice in Holland, once in 1677, with Barclay, Penn, and Keith, and they then met with the Collegianten in Amsterdam, at Harlingen, and other places. They had a dispute with Galenus Abrahams, a Mennonite teacher of that time, who had led a large party among the Mennonites into a species of Socinianism. The subject of this dispute is important and interesting. It continued five hours, and Galenus Abrahams affirmed, in opposition to Fox and Penn, &c., "that there was no Christian Church, ministry, or commission Apostolical now in the world,"* and the discussion appears to have terminated decidedly in favour of the Friends. On Fox's second visit, he paid Galenus a private visit, and found him "very loving and tender, and he confessed in some measure to truth; his wife and daughter were tender and kind, and we parted from them very lovingly."

The Society of Friends spread at this period rapidly, and their adherents were very numerous in Holland. (But not only did the leaders of the early Society of Friends take great interest in the Mennonites, but the Yearly Meeting of 1709 contributed fifty pounds (a very large sum at that time) for the Mennonites of the Palatinate, who had fled from the persecution of the Calvinists in Switzerland. This required the agreement of the representatives of above 400 Churches, and shows in a strong light the sympathy which existed among the early Friends for the Mennonites. It must, however, not be forgotten that Fox had promulgated opinions, and founded churches, bearing the close approximation to

* We have here the doctrine of the English "Seekers" traced to Holland.—See p. 410.

that of the Mennonite churches in Holland, which we have noticed, long prior to the preaching of the Friends in Holland.

NOTE, AS TO THE PRACTICES OF THE CALVINISTIC BAPTISTS.—In May, 1654, Thomas Tillam, the Minister of the Hexham Seventh-day Baptist Church, who had gone to London, writes thus:—“For after I had enjoyed heavenly communion with my precious brethren, of *Coleman Street*, and had acquainted them with my purpose to obey Christ in the fourth principle—(we conclude, the laying on of hands)—I was, by a blessed hand, guided to my most heavenly brother, Doctor Chamberlen, one of the most humble, mortified souls for a man of parts that ever I yet met with; in whose sweet society I enjoyed the blessing of God, by the laying on of hands; and, after a love-feast, having washed one another’s feet, we did joyfully break bread, and concluded with a hymn, in all which the singular Majesty of Christ shined forth to the mighty conviction of some choice spectators. And now, what am I to whom God should make known His truths, professed even of late by some of His eminent servants, and amongst the rest, by Mr. Tombes? I thank and heartily salute you all. Oh, that you could embrace it as the mind of Christ, to *greet one another with an holy kisse!* Oh, how amiable it is in the Churches where it is practised!” Fox replied to Tillam’s book, “The Seventh-day Sabbath.” Tillam is said to have gone to Germany, where he expected the personal reign of Christ to commence, and to have joined some churches of the Mennonites.—Douglas’s “History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England.” London, 1846, pp. 57, 58, 67.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE INTERNAL HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. GEORGE FOX IS CONVERTED. HE PREACHES AT BAPTIST MEETINGS. COMMENCES IN 1648 TO FORM A SOCIETY. HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH OATES, THE CELEBRATED GENERAL BAPTIST PREACHER. HE COLLECTS A BAND OF PREACHERS. IS INVITED TO SWARTHMORE HALL. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PREACHING OF THE "CHILDREN OF LIGHT." MARGARET FELL. FOX'S OPPOSITION TO A MINISTRY SUPPORTED BY THE STATE. HIS APPROVAL OF A MINISTRY FREELY SUPPORTED BY CONGREGATIONS.

We shall now endeavour to trace the history of the Society which Fox founded, simply in its practical bearing, introducing matters of doctrine only where it is absolutely needful to elucidate our subject. The materials from which the subsequent chapters are framed have been elicited, with considerable labour, from a mass of documents in the shape of Society manuscripts, meeting minutes and records, as well as pamphlets.

They tend to exhibit various matters connected with the rise of the Society of Friends, in a new light, and will, I trust, more clearly explain the real causes of the decline of the Society of Friends, as a Church, than has been hitherto done; not only to this Society itself, but to the members of many other Christian Churches. In such a work it will be hardly expected by the Christian

public, or by the more intelligent members of the Society of Friends, that the inferences drawn will be altogether welcome, or readily accepted. The author has been governed in this investigation by a simple desire to arrive at the truth ; and if it should be shown, that in any details in a subject of such intricacy and difficulty, he is in error, the error will, he believes, be found not to affect the general bearing of the question.

George Fox left his home in 1643. He tell us that he had an uncle in London, of the name of Pickering, who was a Baptist. Although the Baptists were "tender then," he could not join with them. Some "tender" Christian people wished him to stay in London, but he was fearful of doing so, and went back to Leicestershire. He next turned to several of the Presbyterian ministers, who did not "reach his condition." He appears, during the five years between 1643 and 1648, to have listened to and weighed almost all the various religious opinions which were current at that eventful period. In the course of his travels, there was scarcely a phase of religious thought with which he was not brought into actual contact. In 1646, he regarded "the priests less, and the dissenting people more," and he found more "tenderness" among them. He read his Bible, walked in solitary places many days, sat in hollow trees and lonesome places till night came on, and at last, when all his hopes were gone of finding some one to "speak to his condition," he "heard a voice which said, 'There is One, even Jesus Christ, that can speak to thy condition,' and when he 'heard it, his heart leapt for joy.' " "The Father of Life drew him to His Son, by His Spirit." "Then the Lord gently led him along, and let him see His love, which is endless and eternal. That love let him see himself. It showed him that all are concluded under sin, and shut up

in unbelief, and that Jesus Christ enlightens, gives grace, faith, and power—that *all* was done by *Christ*.” Such is the account which George Fox gives, of that great spiritual change, which is described by our Lord as the New Birth. Fox was a young man who had striven for years to perform the whole law of God, like Wesley; but the result of this great change was, that “his sorrows and troubles began to wear off, and tears of joy dropped from him,” and he saw the “infinity of the love of God” in Christ.

In 1647 and 1648, he preached at some Baptist meetings, and meetings of professing Christians who met to pray and expound the Scriptures, and at times the Bible was handed to him to expound and defend his views, which he never shrank from, quoting chapter and verse. He went also from town to town, often speaking to the “wickedest” people in the country. He saw clearly that “the knowledge” of Christ “in the Spirit is *life*,” “but that the knowledge which is fleshly works death;” and that where there is this knowledge only, deceit and self will *conform to anything*, and say “yes, yes, to that it doth not know.” Their knowledge of the Scriptures was “in a form, but not in the life and spirit which gave them forth.”

The Assembly of Divines were busied with their “godly reformation,” but the more he saw of the new black-coated Presbyterian ministers, and those who conformed to the Directory, the more he thought that they needed themselves to be reformed, and to be “changed men themselves,” as Penn said, “before they went about to change others.”* He spoke to justices and judges to do justice, to public-

* Even Baxter contends that this is unnecessary in a minister:—“Take *them* not for no ministers that *want grace totally*. “He may perform the office of a minister to the benefit of the Church, though he have *no saving grace at all*.”—Page 114, “Cure of Church Divisions.”

house keepers that they should “not let people have more drink than would do them good.” With a keen perception of the evils of drunkenness, he anticipated modern temperance reformers, in petitioning Parliament against allowing more public-houses than are necessary for “*bonâ fide* travellers,” and thus multiplying *mere* drinking-houses.* He testified against wakes, feasts, May-games, sports, plays, and shows. In fairs and markets he preached against deceitful merchandise, cheating and cozening, and warned all to deal justly and to speak the truth, to let their yea be yea, and nay nay, and to do to others as they would that others should do to them. “Schools and school-masters,” and “mistresses and mothers,” he warned to take care that children and servants might be trained up in the fear of the Lord.

In 1649, Fox desired an interview with Samuel Oates, the celebrated General Baptist preacher, and “others the heads of them.” They had a religious conference, and parted lovingly from him.† “It was,” says Sewel, “in the year 1648, that several persons seeking the Lord were become fellow believers, and entered into society

* “Let none be *brewers* (probably all ale-houses brewed at this period) in your dominions but such as are wholesome people, fearing God, and not destructive to the creation of God, for lodging travellers or passengers—there are multitudes (*i.e.*, of ‘*other ale-houses*’) ‘that are *not able to lodge* travellers passing;’ for the nursing up of young people to looseness, folly, and vanity—this is not a sweet savour among them that are called Christians”—G. Fox to the Protector and Parliament of England, 1658.

† Samuel Oates was sent out as an itinerant preacher by Lamb’s Church, in Bell Alley, London. He was a popular and acceptable preacher, and an able disputant. He was a weaver by trade, and a young man. In 1645 he had laboured in Sussex and Surrey, and had been imprisoned and tried for murder, merely because a young woman he had baptised (and who was better in health for it) happened to die a few weeks after her baptism. Such was the respect in which he was held, that numbers of persons came down in their coaches from London, to visit him in prison. He had preached at Dunmow, and on one of his visits the mob threw him into the river, in order “thoroughly to dip him.” On another occasion, some strangers coming from London

with George Fox.”* Fox found that “the land mourned because of oaths, adulteries, drunkenness, and profaneness.” The enormity of capital punishment for theft early engaged his attention; he also, from a more extensive experience of prison discipline than any man in England, advocated bringing men to trial speedily, because the evil association of thieves in jails made them “learn wickedness one of another.” In the years 1651 and 1652, we find other preachers in connection with Fox—Aldam, Farnsworth, Dewsbury, Howgill, Audland, Camm, Naylor, and Edward Burrough, who has been called the Whitfield of Quakerism, a man of rough-and-ready eloquence and untiring energy, quaintly named “a son of thunder and consolation;” also George Whitehead, a man of considerable polish of manners, eloquence, and argumentative skill. To these must be added Thomas Taylor, Miles Halhead, Richard Hubberthorne,† and John Wilkinson, a preacher among the Independents.

In the winter of 1652, Fox, and two of his companions,

were assumed to be Oates and his friends, and were seized and “pumped soundly.” When Fox was in London, in 1643, there were four congregations, at least, of General Baptists, one of which had been established twenty years.—(Wood’s “General Baptists,” p. 116.) At that period Lamb’s Church was in a flourishing state (in 1640), and it seems reasonable to suppose that Fox came in contact with the General Baptists when in London. Could it be proved that his uncle Pickering belonged to one of these Churches, it would be an interesting link in the chain. We can hardly doubt the object of Fox, in seeking this interview with Samuel Oates and the other General Baptist preachers. Fox was doubtless aware of Oates’ antecedents, and of the close approximation of their religious principles. Had he succeeded in his object, a young, able, and resolute preacher would have been secured to the Society.

* “Sewel’s History,” p. 20. Harvey & Darton, 1834.

† “They had got to their champion the famous Richard Hubberthorne, well known by his printed pamphlets, and, to speak truth, the most rational, calm-spirited man of his judgment that I was ever publicly engaged against.”—“Adam Martindale’s Autobiography,” p. 115.

were invited by Margaret Fell to Swarthmore Hall, in the detached part of Lancashire called "Furness," which lies north of Morecambe Bay. Swarthmore Hall was the family mansion of Judge Fell. Fell was a successful barrister, who was afterwards raised to the Bench. He was Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster, Chancellor of the Duchy Court of Westminster, and a county magistrate. He was returned to Parliament as a representative for Lancashire, in 1645. In the latter years of Cromwell's administration, he retired from parliamentary life. The Protector sought, but in vain, to attach Judge Fell closely to his Government and person. As a mark of his regard, he presented him with a silver cup.* Judge Fell, however, kept aloof from any connection with Cromwell, and his wife reaped the advantage of this loyalty during Charles the Second's reign.

It was a frequent occurrence for "lecturing ministers" to visit Furness, preaching to the people; and this explains the reception Judge Fell's wife gave to Fox. It appears that she and her family were curious to see the Drayton reformer. There was to be a lecture at Ulverston, which Margaret Fell wished Fox to attend, and, as was the custom, to have an opportunity of preaching after the lecturer had done. The result was, that Margaret Fell became convinced that Fox was the kind of reformer that was wanted, and she was also converted under his preaching. Judge Fell, although great efforts were used to prejudice him, heard Fox for himself, and, having probably seen much of the doings of the Presbyterian party, he recognised the truth of what Fox said respecting "the practices of the priests," *i.e.*, of the new Presbyterian

* Mrs. Webb's "Fell's of Swarthmore Hall," pp. 1, 5, 34.

ministers, who had been, and still were, taking the places of the Anglican clergy.* As early as February, 1652, we find Judge Fell's wife entrusting him with tracts and papers, written by Fox and the preachers of the new Society, to be printed. She tells her husband that, "if they are published, it will, she is sure, be for the glory of God," and "it is very hard that the press must be shut against the truth," and open for all pamphlets and ballads of an irreligious tendency. Margaret Fell may very aptly be called the Lady Huntingdon of the new Society; and the influence of Judge Fell was not only exerted to the uttermost to shield the preachers within the district, but, as we shall endeavour to show, Swarthmore Hall was the centre of the spiritual organisation of the Society of Friends. This is evidenced by the existence of a great mass of letters, which are preserved in the Library of Devonshire House, London, with the records of the Society, consisting of letters addressed to Swarthmore Hall, from the preachers in connection with Fox, giving an account of their movements and success, to Margaret Fell, and through her to Fox. Up to 1661, Swarthmore Hall was secure from violation, and these letters range over the period from 1651 to 1661.

It appears to us that it was about this period that Fox saw how little he could effect single-handed, and although several able preachers had already united with him in his

* "The Clergy in their Colors; or, The Pride and Avarice of the Presbyterian Clergy hindering Reformation, &c. A Plain and Familiar Dialogue between Philalethes and Presbyter." London, 1651 (written some years before publication), p. 41.—"The truth is, the preaching of the Gospel is merely made a trade, to get money. They preach for hire, run before they be called, come in at the window like a thief, preach according to their pay, provided they may have sufficient to keep contempt from the clergy, be as powerful as the popish doctors, and able through their abundance to contend with their whole parish, and swagger in their silks, *as their predecessors did*, they will be content; otherwise, they will tell you you 'rob God,' in not paying their tythes, and do not allow them honourable maintenance."

Gospel labours, there can be little doubt that he received great encouragement from his visit to Swarthmore Hall, and shortly afterwards we find an organized band of preachers, who made extensive use of the press to promulgate their views of Christian truth, and an organized society making collections, and dispensing funds for common uses from Swarthmore Hall.

The religious needs of the country were most pressing. In London, in 1646, there were thirty-two parishes churches, utterly destitute of any pastor.* The Mayor of Sunderland wrote, in a petition to Parliament—"We are a people who have been destitute of a preaching minister—yea, ever since any of us who are now breathing were born, to our soul's grief and dreadful hazard of destruction; neither is it our case alone, but also ten or twelve parishes all adjoining are in like manner void of the means of salvation."†

We find Fox preaching at Hexham, and in this district, in the open air, to large audiences. Not only was this method of itinerant lay preaching admirably adapted to the spiritual necessities of the country, but it was, to the great mass of the people, emphatically "good news."

There is a striking coincidence between the principal points which were insisted upon by the early Friends, in their bold and fearless itinerant preaching, and the teaching

* "The Preacher's Plea: being a short Declaration touching the sad condition of the Clergy," concerning their maintenance, &c., by William Typing, Esq., London, 1646, pp. 19, 18; also p. 30:—"It would make a man's heart bleed to see how many drunken, ignorant, superstitious, profane ministers are crept into every quarter of the land (*e.g.*, in Oxfordshire.) In divers places they are turned into constant preachers, which seldom or never preached before." There was then computed that there were 9,200 parish churches, and nearly 4,000 were unappropriated. He very justly remarks that—"One may as well expect dead bones to stir, as that such parishes as have been for twenty, thirty, or forty years together 'misled up' under an '*unpreaching ministry, men with unregenerate hearts,*' will ever desire themselves an able and sufficient pastor."

† The original is to be found in the folio "King's Pamphlets," British Museum.

of John Smyth, of Amsterdam; the connection of whose opinions, with those of the celebrated Hans de Rys and Caspar Schwenkfeld has been previously shown. Their whole system of theology was a protest against the preaching of the Puritan party. They taught the great masses of the people that the love of God was not narrowed to a small circle of the elect, but embraced every one of His children—that Christ died for the sins of the whole world. That He was not only the Saviour of the world, but the Light of the world, and that a full, free, and effectual offer of salvation was made by Christ himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, to every man. If it was replied, “But He has not made this offer to me,” it was answered to this effect: “Have you no Light upon the path of duty? Cease to do evil, learn to do well, and wait, not in the neglect of the house of prayer and the fellowship of God’s people, but meet with those who are seeking to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, and the Sun of Righteousness will at last shine upon the path to Heaven, and you will know Christ for yourself as a *living* Saviour—a Saviour, who, as a pledge of His forgiveness of past sins, will give you power to become one of the sons of God. You will be ‘all taught of God,’ and, ‘walking in the Light,’ you will be guided in your personal duty, and know the blood of Christ to cleanse you from all sin.”

The new society called themselves, in their earliest letters and documents at the commencement of the movement, “*The Children of Light.*”* This name was

* e.g. See “Rules Concerning the Church,” among the Bristol MSS., no date. “The Elders and Brethren send greeting unto the Brethren in this work these necessary things following, to which in the Light, if ye wait to be kept in obedience, ye will do well. Farewell.” “That the particular meetings by all the Children of Light be daily kept,” &c. Many other papers, both printed and MS., are thus addressed.

quite new in England, but *had, long prior to this, been used by some of the Continental Baptists.**

The idea of what Fox called the doctrine of "sin for the term of life," greatly troubled him—that "the body of sin" never should be overcome in this world, seemed to him to be unscriptural, and to limit the power of the Holy Spirit. He taught that the christian is to "go on unto perfection;" and although he had not the power of logical definition which was possessed by John Wesley, the careful student of his works will find, that on this and many other points, there is a very close approximation between the teaching of Wesley and of Fox. These ideas were then quite new to

* See Professor Cornelius' "Geschichte des Munster's Aufruhrs," p. 67, v. 2. Professor Cornelius writes me, "The designation of the Baptists as 'Kinder des Lichtes,' I have taken out of the document 'Brüderliche Vereinigung.' It was also used by the Baptists themselves; I have no doubt it was very often used by them." He is, however, not aware that any special portion of the Baptist Societies used it in "so to speak, a technical sense." There were among the brethren those who held the ceremonies (*i.e.* Baptism and the Lord's Supper) in little or no estimation." Ibid p. 273.

There is an able treatise called "The Life and Light of a Man in Christ Jesus," London, 1646, which advocates the "Doctrine of the Light" in very striking coincidence with the views and method of statement of Fox. "The true Light," the author says, "by professors in these times, and especially the persons who outstrip the rest in knowledge, is esteemed by them exactly as 'false light is esteemed of by a child of true Light.'" At page 137 of the foregoing, we find in this somewhat eloquent, although anonymous treatise, one or two sentences which will give the reader an idea of the parallelism of religious thought with the expressions of Fox, to which we advert:—"That everlasting Light, which shineth in upon the darkness of sinful fallen man, hath always shined in and upon the man, as the sun hath always shined in and upon the creation. . . . The sun and moon are as sparkling, visible figures of this infinite, everlasting Light, who giveth their splendour to every creature that is capable to receive it, and offereth it to the poor and base, as well as to the rich and honourable, as well to the unjust as to the just."—(Matt. iii. 45.) So that the day-spring and great light, Christ, is risen and come into the world; but "men love darkness rather than light."—(John iii. 19.) John Goodwin, the celebrated Independent, wrote a work some years prior to this, entitled "The Child of Light Walking in Darkness;" and the whole idea of the period appears to have been that of a special and supernatural outburst of "new light," although the peculiar form in which Fox promulgated his doctrines is not found, and is peculiar and foreign to England.—*For continuation of note, see p. 273.*

the great masses of the people, who were mainly accustomed to the doctrines of extreme Calvinism.*

One great object of Fox and the early preachers, was to strike a blow at the priestly power, which they conceived was the origin of the ungodly state of the country.

One of the first Churches which Fox gathered, was at Sedbergh, in Yorkshire, where Justice Benson, an eminent member of an Independent Church, was convinced of the truth of Fox's views, and here at Firbank chapel nearly the whole of the two congregations of Independents joined him. At this latter place he met with Howgill and Audland, who were both preachers among the Independents. Howgill had had an university education, and Audland was "an eminent teacher among the Independents, and had a very numerous auditory," as Sewel tells us. Firbank Chapel is situated on the summit of a conical hill, and for miles in every direction hardly anything can be seen but

* Fox had strong feelings respecting the peculiar doctrine of Calvinistic theology, election and reprobation. The following curious remarks of his are taken from the "MSS. Short Journal of G. Fox," in the library at Devonshire House:—"And also the priests of Scotland's principle was, that God had *ordained* the greatest part of men and women of the world—for He lets them pray, or do all that ever they could do—without any cause, less or more, or fault in the creature, God had *ordained them for hell*, and God had *ordained* a number of men and women *for heaven*,—let them sin, or do whatever they could do,—they should be saved." Fox says they alleged Jude's authority for this, but explains that Jude says it was because they were "ungodly" that they were "*ordained*," &c., and then adds, "and yet these priests could see *no cause why this people* should be condemned." "And them that do sin, and do unrighteously, their righteousness shall be remembered no more, and if they sin wilfully after they receive a knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin." "And this corrupt doctrine is spread over all Scotland, and most part of England." He adds, "The grace of God, if it be minded, will bring every man to salvation." It must be remembered, that as a witness to the prevalence of rigid Calvinism in England, perhaps no one was in a better position to know the actual facts. The "priests of Scotland" had just given forth, the MS. journal says, "an order to be read in the steeple-houses, which cursed him who said he had a light from Christ sufficient to lead him to salvation, and let all the people say Amen."

dreary moor land. Adjoining this chapel is a huge rock, having at its base a spring of water. Up into this primeval solitude, Fox, after preaching at the chapel in the morning, was followed in the afternoon by more than a thousand people, and refreshing himself at the spring, he ascended the rock, and for three hours fixed the attention, and moved the hearts of his audience. Both ministers and people were gained, and Fox says more than a thousand persons were convinced. Wherever he went the wave of spiritual emotion swept after him; conversions amongst all classes began to be counted by hundreds. Nor was this the effect of a mere temporary excitement. In a large number of instances it resulted in permanently changing the character, and producing fruits "unto holiness, the end whereof is everlasting life." *

It is a great error, to conceive that Fox and his mission were altogether unpopular. The personal violence he endured was mainly the work of the lowest class of the population,† who persecuted Fox and his followers, supposing them to be against the King.‡ These were stirred up by

* Lecture on the "Rise and Progress of Friends," by W. Thistletonwaite. Bennett, 1865.

† Caton says in a letter, that at a market town near Horton, "the barbarous people came marching up to their house like men ready for a battle, as if they would have pulled down the house. He asked them what they wanted, and they said Quakers; he went down, and talked to them calmly, and the danger was at an end." "To the Parliament and Commonwealth of England," 1659, by G. F. Page 9.—"Now the people of the world that come into our meeting spit upon us, throw stones at us, set and throw dogs at us, speak all manner of evil upon us, and all manner of slander. Them that be *great professors*, and *great talkers* practise this, and pluck us down, yet if our friend go into the steeple-house, and ask but a question, they will hale him out and cast him into prison, or if he speak never a word they will cast him into prison; and if he do not go they will cast into prison for asking a question."

‡ These were generally for the King, as at Carlisle, 1653.—"At length the rude people of the city rose, and came with staves and stones into the steeple-house, crying, 'Down with Roundheaded rogues.' "

the Presbyterian ministry, just as a similar class of persons were occasionally induced by the parish clergyman to attack the Wesleys. In one case, when “warrants were all over the West Riding to take me, the constable having the warrant in his pocket, told me of it,” and instead of using it, stayed the meeting.* Fox embraced every opportunity of preaching; sometimes he spoke in town halls, sometimes in the market-places, in the churchyards, under the old yew trees, in the fields, or on the top of a hay-rick, or the stump of a tree; by the sea side, or on the hill side. Every portion of God’s earth was holy ground, and Fox held that open-air and itinerant preaching were consecrated by the example of Christ and His apostles. On many occasions he had thousands of hearers. On market days a great opportunity presented itself, in the “lectures” which were then given in the churches, and of this Fox almost invariably availed himself. It was then a common practice, after the lecturer had done, to allow other speakers to address the congregation, subject to the permission of a justice of the peace, who had the power of forbidding the speaker.

In the year 1653† we find that no fewer than thirty itinerant, or travelling preachers had joined Fox. By the year 1654, Fox had organized a band of sixty travelling preachers of the Gospel.

It has been hastily assumed, by a later generation of the Society of Friends, and consequently by others, that these men wandered throughout England precisely as they were “moved by the Spirit.” But there is a large amount of evidence to show that Fox and these worthies did not

* “MSS. Journal of George Fox,” Devonshire House Library.

† MSS.—“An account of the first publishing of truth in Westmoreland.” Devonshire House Library.

consider the influences of the Spirit of Christ, by which they were led to preach the Gospel, and denounce the abuses of the times, as subverting the human intellect, but as applying all its resources to the glory of God, and the progress of the Gospel. If they were mad, precisely as some deemed Wesley and his preachers, there was certainly a "method in their madness," for which they have not received due credit. It will be seen, as the history of the Society's organization is more fully developed, that there were good reasons for not making common property of details which were used sixteen or twenty years afterwards, as a handle to represent the Founders of the Society as inconsistent with their original principles. In a later generation, the phrases of Fox and his preachers, which were originally the ordinary phrases of the more godly people of the period, the Independents, the Baptists, and the rigid Puritans, were stereotyped, and made to support other views of spiritual influences than those held by Fox. Fox meant, by the technical phrases he used, which *now* sound quaint, and hardly intelligible, to express views of real, spiritual religion, akin to those of Wesley. The Society, at a later age, used them to express the Quietism of Lady Guion. The former represented a vast spiritual power, the latter an empty mysticism, which was practically incapable of doing Christ's work in the world. If we speak of Fox as holding "mystical" views, we must define our meaning. All shades of religious opinions, from the form in which Christianity is presented by the Apostle John, to the utterances of writers, of whom it may be said, that they have written *chapters* in which *a lucid interval is hardly to be detected*, have been called mystical. To "the mystical death, self-annihilation, and holy indifference of the Quietists," Fox is an entire stranger.

We have already alluded to Margaret, the wife of Judge

Fell. She was the great granddaughter of the celebrated martyred lady, Anne Askew, the second daughter of Sir William Askew, of Kelsy, in Lincolnshire. Anne Askew was a victim of Bishops Bonner and Gardiner, and Wriothesly the Lord Chancellor (who racked her with his own hands), and she was carried in a chair to the stake (26th July, 1545). Foxe, the Martyrologist, says, that the three martyrs who were burnt to death with her, became "emboldened, and they received the greater comfort in that painful kind of death." "Beholding her invincible constancy, and being stirred up through her persuasion, they did set apart all fear."* We can well understand the story of the martyrdom was handed down as a fearful heirloom in the family of the Askews, and that when the young reformer, also of "the stock of the martyrs," showed her how the axe might be laid to the root of Romanism, and the persecuting spirit of priestcraft, Margaret Fell embraced the views of Fox with all the generous warmth of a woman's nature. She was no ordinary woman. She had a "beaming countenance," and "most sweet, harmonious voice." She was a devoted wife and mother, and Mrs. Webb, in her "Fells of Swarthmore Hall," draws a beautiful picture of the sunny happiness of this family of the stern Commonwealth times—consisting of seven daughters and one son—a picture which was marred only by the injustice and cruelty of persecutors.

Margaret Fell herself, and several members of her family, were at different times imprisoned for the testimony of a good conscience. Her estates were restored to her after she had been seven years a premunired prisoner, in a "place," as she writes to King Charles, "not fit for

* Anne Askew had embraced Melchior Hoffman's opinions.

human beings to live in; where storm, wind and rain, and smoke, entered in the keen weather." Her letters show her to have been a woman of considerable intellectual powers. She had property of her own, and there is every description of indirect evidence to show that the fund, by which this preaching was supported, was largely reinforced by Margaret Fell. Swarthmore Hall was an open house of entertainment for the travelling preachers. Her faith was strong, even when "the hay" seemed likely to be "eaten up" by their horses. The next year it was so abundant, that they had "to sell" it!

The Swarthmore Papers show clearly the position she held with reference to the rise of the Society of Friends, and also that Fox was the centre of this vast religious organization.* In all matters of delicacy or difficulty, the most eminent preachers in the Society were constantly in direct communication with Fox, and looked to him for help and advice.

We shall proceed to illustrate the following and other points, by quotations from the Swarthmore Papers, and various other sources. First—That the preaching in the steeple-houses by the early Friends, was a practice admissible under the circumstances, and allowed by the law and acknowledged custom, during the period from 1648 to 1660, and that Fox and his society cannot be justly charged with conduct in the slightest degree similar to the disturbance of the public worship of a congregation, or interference with a clergyman of the Established Church, in the performance of his duty at the present day. Secondly—That Fox was applied to, to supply preachers for congregations who wanted them, and that he exercised control in

* Considering the population of Great Britain, it will bear comparison with the rise of Methodism.

displacing unsuitable preachers; and that in the same sense as the London Missionary Society sends out foreign missionaries, so Fox was the means of sending out the ministers of the Society. Thirdly—That there are strong reasons for believing that the early Society of Friends possessed a system of circuit, or itinerant preaching (taking into account the troubled circumstances of the times), nearly as complete as that of the Wesleyans.

Mr. Marsden, in his "History of the Later Puritans," reminds us of a point very often forgotten by the readers of Fox's autobiography, viz., that Quakerism opposed itself at first to "priests" and "steeple-houses," when a Presbyterian ministry occupied the parish churches; when ministers wore a Genevan gown, and preached extempore, and when the Prayer-book was banished from the parish church. Its early quarrel was not with liturgies and organs, but with the somewhat bald simplicity of the *Presbyterian* worship. We should rather say, its quarrel was not so much with the worship, as this is seldom objected to, as with the "man made," or "State's ministers;"* the newly-imposed Presbyterian ministry, who were never popular, and were regarded as the representatives of the system with which the Westminster Assembly of Divines would have saddled the country. To believe in the Apostolic Succession and Ordination by a bishop, or that each church should elect their minister, involved principles which were open to discussion, but these Presbyterian ministers were then essentially "man made"—"State ministers," to use the words of the early Friends†—the creation of the State in

* See "Short Journal of G. Fox," where this expression occurs many times.

† "Ye sell by the Glass (*i.e.*, Hour Glass)." "They cannot say that they have lived upon the Gospel, but they have *lived upon the State*." He that lives upon the *Gospel gets a flock, and gets a vineyard.*" "Now there are State's ministers made by man." "Fox's Great Mystery: Answer to Weld, Prideaux," &c., in "The Perfect Pharisee."

the most palpable form—violating every principle on which the christian ministry should be chosen. Fox believed that Christ, as Head of the Church, chose his own ministers—in a word, he believed in the development of the spiritual gifts of the laity. Lay preaching, as opposed to a *priesthood created by the civil power*, was the principle Fox opposed to the dreaded ascendancy of Rome, which was to lay the axe to the root of the upas tree of a priesthood, whether Roman, Anglican, or Presbyterian—this last being dreaded as a more ingenious form of priestly tyranny by the old and true stock of the Independents and Baptists, as well as the followers of Fox.*

It is a great mistake—a mistake which has produced serious consequences in the Society which Fox founded—to suppose that Fox, in protesting against a “hireling ministry,” *protested against all payments to ministers of the Gospel*. What he opposed, was a ministry which was the creature of the civil power, and hired by it. His views were precisely the same as those of many, probably of a great majority, of the Independents and Baptists of that day. Taylor thus describes the views of the General Baptists: “The ministers of Christ, they say, who have freely received from God, ought freely to minister to others; and such as have spiritual things ministered unto them, ought freely to communicate necessary things to the ministers upon account of their charge; but tithes, or any forced maintenance we utterly deny to be the maintenance of Gospel ministers.”† Both the Elders and Messengers of the General Baptists generally carried on business, and

* “What a dismal slaughter-house, and a black Tophet would England soon become, were the sword once gotten into the hands of an imperious Presbytery!” “Rabshakeh’s Outrage Reproved; or, A Whipp for W. Grigg, of Bristol,” p. 7. London, 1568.

† “Taylor’s Baptists,” vol. i., p. 420.

served the church gratuitously, receiving little excepting travelling expenses. So late as 1679, it was considered a cause worthy of church censure, to affirm "that men ought to have a *set* maintenance for preaching."* The principles and practice of the Calvinistic Baptists were originally the same. The Independents and Baptists, who were denounced by Fox and his friends in terms similar to the Presbyterian ministers, as "hireling ministers," were those who, contrary to their principles, received the State maintenance.† This was strongly opposed in 1654 by many of the Baptist Churches, in a "Declaration by several of the Churches of Christ," &c. They liken the Court of Tryers to the High Commission Court, and call it "the graven image of the *worldly power*, creating a *worldly clergy* for *worldly ends*," and denounce it as "against the rule of the Gospel and the faith of Christ, and as much to be exploded as the Pope and the Prelate."

The following quotation clearly shows that there was originally no difference of view upon the subject of the maintenance of the ministry, between George Fox and his followers on the one hand, and the Independents and Baptists on the other. A large portion of the Independents, and a few of the Baptists, eventually fell away from their principles and received State pay. In 1658, Fox thus addressed the Protector and Parliament of England:—"Now, if ye be such as propagate the Gospel (which Gospel is the power of God and a free Gospel) . . . As for the maintenance and means of ministers, leave that to

* "Berkhampstead Church Book," 1679, quoted by Taylor.

† *e.g.*, "Fox's Great Mystery."—Tombe, the celebrated Baptist, comes in for, perhaps, a larger share of blame, because he is considered a special renegade from sound Baptist principles. He "preaches," "divines," "prophesies" "for money," and "prepares war against those who will not put into his mouth—*witness thy eggs* (tithe eggs), give thee *eggs*, and thou wilt say they *are* good Churchmen!"

the people, and see if the preaching of *that* will (not) so open the hearts of (the) people as *to lay down their possessions at the feet of ministers*, and so let a man *plant* a vineyard before he eat of the fruit of it. Let him *GET* a flock before he eat of the milk. *So thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corne.* Then the ox may eat, and they that preach the Gospel may live of the Gospel. Now *establishing* of maintenance for ministry, and giving them a set maintenance, and they taking it by compulsion by an outward law, this is *never likely to open the hearts of people*, nor ever likely to bring men to '*live of the Gospel*', when they have a set maintenance set them."

The views of Fox and Burroughs* here expressed, are far broader and more comprehensive than those which have been since developed in the Society of Friends, and not only were these sentiments professed, but they were acted upon. In the early Society, the committee who attended to the needs of the ministry, were exempted from giving any particular account of the monies expended, and we

* "To the Protector and Parliament of England, 1658," p. 59. See also, "A Just and Lawful Trial of the Teachers and Professed Ministers of this Age and Generation," whereto is added a short description of the true ministry of Christ, and of his lawful and just maintenance according to the Apostle's example, and now again justified by the people called Quakers in England. By E. Burroughs. London, 1659. Page 22.— "If this law of equity and righteousness were established, and all people left free to hear and approve of whom they will, and then to pay and maintain them, and this (too) would try the ministers, and who converted the most to God, and gained the love of most people, and if they wrought well they may receive *maintenance accordingly* by the free gift of the people, and the ministers that are not content with this law, are out of pure reason and equity, and showing that they dare not trust the Lord, nor *the fruits of their labours*. But in equity and justice let every minister be maintained by the fruits of his own labour, from the people for whom he doth labour. By this, all people may understand *the ministers and ministry we do not allow and approve of*, and how ministers ought to be maintained. And if any go forth to a place and county (and) among the people that are *not converted*, then the church ought to take care to maintain such in their work, *till they may reap of their own labour, and eat of the fruit of their own vineyard*."

shall see that the liberal supply of the needs of the early preachers, and the fact that a large number of them were exclusively employed in preaching, formed one of the complaints made against Fox by a new school of opinion in the Society.

At the rise of the "Children of Light," they were often ignorantly charged with the opinions of the Ranters, e.g., that "they would not have any to read, pray, and teach, but when the Spirit of the Lord leads them;" and they reply to this charge, "*praying in families*, and reading and instructing of children, and bringing them up in the fear of the Lord, and *teaching* according to the Apostle's doctrine, we own."* The use by Fox of the term "steeple-houses" for church buildings, has been supposed to be one of his personal oddities. The term is used by Cotton, the celebrated New England Independent. It was commonly used by the Baptists,† long prior to the commencement of Fox's preaching.

* "A Short Answer to a Book set forth by Seven Priests," page 19, 1654. King's Pamphlets, vol. 615, tract 10, p. 19.

† Featley's "Dippers Dipped," p. 14, Anabaptist—"The Word of God doth not command us to come to your steeple-houses." "Gangrœna," part iii., p. 4, 1646—"Black-coated preachers, (i.e., Presbyterians) that did now preach in steeple-houses."

CONTINUATION OF NOTE ON THE NAME "CHILDREN OF LIGHT." See p. 262.—The following is a quotation from the document "Brüderliche Vereinigung." There is a copy of this work in the State Library of Munich. It was printed with a letter of Michael Sattler's and the history of his martyrdom. There are two editions of the same in the Mennonite Library at Amsterdam, in Dutch. The date is, Dr. Scheffer informs me, 1527:—"Freud, fried, und barmhertzigkeit von unserm vatter, durch die vereinigung des blüts Christi Jesu mit sampt den gaben des Geists der vom vatter gesendt wirt allen glaubigen zü sterke und trost und bestendigkeit in allen trübsal bis an das ende. Amen.—Sei mit allen liebhabern Gottes und *Kinder des Liechts*, welche zerspreit seind allenthalben wo sie von Gott unserm vatter verordnet seind wo sie versamlet seind einmütiglich in einem Got und vatter unser aller gnad und fried im hertzen sei mit euch allen. Amen." It will be seen that the term is used in precisely the same kind of documents, and in the same way, among the Friends and the Continental Baptists. The note on page 267 may prove to have considerable importance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CUSTOM OF PREACHING IN THE CHURCHES "AFTER THE PRIEST HAD DONE," WHEN THE CHURCH WAS "RE-MODELLED AFTER THE FASHION OF SCOTLAND." THE EARLY FRIENDS, BY DOING SO, DID NOT INTENTIONALLY DISTURB PUBLIC WORSHIP. FOX REQUESTED TO PREACH IN THE CHURCHES. NOT INDICTED FOR DISTURBING CONGREGATIONS. "PROPHESYING" OF LAYMEN APPROVED BY "FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE" OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND. CHURCHES TREATED AS PUBLIC BUILDINGS. THE RIGHT OF LAYMEN TO PREACH IN CHURCHES. "PROPHESYING" USUAL AMONG THE INDEPENDENTS AND BAPTISTS. FEATHLY AND THE BAPTISTS. THE CHARACTER OF THE PREACHING OF THE FRIENDS, AND THE REASONS OF THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CLERGY.

IT must be recollectcd, that the period during which Fox, and the preachers in connection with him, "stood up, after the minister had done," and "declared the Truth," &c., was a period not only of great unsettlement, but that by large sections of the nation, the remodelling of the Church "after the fashion of Scotland," was considered both illegal and unscriptural.*

* The House of Commons ordered, that if a minister of the Church of England should disturb the new Presbyterian minister, he should be imprisoned for a month in consequence of "many violent tumults and outrages."—"King's Pamphlets."—"A Proclamation of Sir Thomas Fairfax," 325-42, and "Ordinance of the House of Commons," 328-18; also "A great fight in the church at Thaxted, on Sunday, between the sequestrators and the ('Church of England') minister."—330-2.

The instance usually relied upon to prove these proceedings to be unseemly interruptions of public worship, &c., is that at Nottingham in 1648, which has been previously noticed. Fox was then quite a young man, in the first year of his ministry; he admits the interruption, and appears to justify it by alleging strong feelings of religious duty. It is hardly to be wondered at, that after reading this, it has been inferred, that if under what Fox deemed his duty, he felt it right to interrupt the ordinary course of public worship in *a single instance*, he would be prepared to defend the same conduct in himself and his followers *in all cases*. It has therefore been assumed, that while claiming the liberty to worship God according to their own consciences, Fox and his followers systematically interrupted the worship of other christians. That in solitary instances an interruption of public worship is fairly chargeable to them, is what they admit. If, however, we can show by sufficient evidence, that their *rule* was to *abstain from any interruption or interference* with public worship, and that their object was to exercise a right which was recognized by the law and customs of this particular period—the heaviest charge which has been made against these men will be removed, and the reader will be prepared to excuse Fox and his followers if the force of their emotions in this stormy period, led them, in isolated cases, into an occasional offence against propriety.*

We believe that this subject has been misunderstood by historians, and that the whole truth of the matter has not

* Where this kind of interruption occurred, we may readily conceive the fault not to have been exclusively on one side—*e.g.*, “Swarthmore Papers,” 1658, J. Nicholls to M. Fell.—“As soon as we came in, the priest began to ‘rayle against the truth,’ so we stood still a little space; then he said, ‘Whence had thou that light, man?’ I said, ‘from Christ Jesus.’ I said no more.”

been stated. There is evidence that Fox and the early preachers spoke a far greater number of times without any interruption whatever of their preaching, and that in many instances* they were requested to preach. The people rung the bells in some districts for Fox to preach in the churches, and in several instances they would have broken open the doors of the churches when the churchwardens refused the keys. We will bring before our readers quotations from unpublished manuscripts:—

“And the truth came over all, and answered all. . . . And there was an old man, a priest,† convinced there. When the people came to him and told him to take his tythe, he denied it, and said he had enough, and there were four chief constables convinced there; and then the priests and people were very loving, and I was desired of them to many places (*i.e.*, to preach in many places); and the old man, the priest, went up and down with me to many steeple-houses, and *the people would ring the bells when we came to a town*, thinking I would speak, and the truth spread, and I spoke in many steeple-houses, but I did not come into their pulpits ‡ (Fox had a strong objection to pulpits), and some places where the priests were afraid, they fled away from the town when as I came to it, *and the people would break open the doors*,§ if I would go into the steeple-house,

* “George Fox’s Journal,” 1651.

† Boyes, at Pickering in Yorkshire—see “George Fox’s Journal,” 1651.

‡ “Miall’s British Churches.” Page 176.—“Oh, those pulpits, and all the influences they infer! Would that no such professional convenience had been invented! Would that some change of feeling, or even of fashion, amongst us, would sweep them clean away!” The early Independents and Baptists had no pulpits.

§ At Dover, in April, 1646, the Independents appointed a pastor; “hereupon they are presently so high flown that they will have *our public meeting place called the church*, to preach a weekly lecture, though we have an order from the committee of Parliament, that there shall be none without *the consent of both ministers* in Dover,

if the churchwardens would not open it, but I would not let them, but spoke to them in the yard or anywhere, the truth of God, and in love it was received, and many justices were living in Yorkshire, and the truth spread.* This may be paralleled by the case of Wishart, a century earlier, of whom it is said, "He then went and preached in many other places, (where) entrance to the churches being denied him, he preached in the fields. He would not suffer the people to open the church doors with violence, for that, he said, became not the gospel which he preached."†

Why should the people break open the doors of the churches, unless an ancient right existed to the public use of churches? We believe it will be found that such a right existed prior to and during the times of the Commonwealth. "And in the afternoon (of Sunday) I went three miles off Beverley, and there went into the steeple-house, and when the priest had done, I spoke to him and the people largely,

and have acquainted them with it; yet some have threatened that if *the key be kept away* they will *break open the doors.*" And since Mr. Davies's journey to London, the members of his church (above named) meeting every Lord's-day, and once in the week, Mr. Mascal (a man employed by the State, to be a perfector of the customs) undertakes to feed the flock, expound the Scripture, and with much vehemency cries out to the people, expressing himself thus against the present (Presbyterian) ministry: "Your priests, your damned priests, your cursed priests, with their fools' coats!"* He presseth them to the uselessness of human learning, &c.—"Gangroena," part ii., p. 163, 1646.

* "Black-coated preachers that did now preach in churches."

* MSS. Short Journal of George Fox, Devonshire House.

† "Universal History of Christian Martyrdom," p. 429, originally composed by the Rev. J. Fox, M.A. By Rev. J. Milner, M.A., *i.e.*, F. W. Blogdon. Wishart, the martyr, was a gentleman, and preached in churches. He was a layman, but had received his education at Cambridge. No exception appears to have been taken to the act of his preaching in the churches, but to the doctrine preached.—"Seyers' Memorials of Bristol," vol. ii., p. 223. "On the 15th May, 1539, George Wisard, or Wisehart, a Scottish preacher, set forth his lecture in St. Nicholas church, in Bristol, of the most blasphemous heresie that ever was heard, &c. He was confronted on this heresie, and had to bear a faggot in St. Nicholas church."

and they were moderate, and many heard the truth gladly and desired me to give them another meeting, and so the truth had its passage.”* And it is to be observed, that in all the letters in the Swarthmore Collection, and in the Short MS. Journal of George Fox, already quoted, there is the same care taken to specify, as is done in George Fox’s published Journal, that they spoke “after the priest had done.” In some instances the priest himself requested Fox to speak. In 1652 Fox writes, (see Journal) “From thence I passed to Ramside, where was a chapel, in which Thomas Lawson used to preach, who was an eminent priest. He lovingly acquainted his people in the morning, of my coming in the afternoon, by which means many were gathered together. When I came I saw there was no place so convenient as the chapel, wherefore I went up into the chapel and all was quiet. Thomas Lawson went not up into his pulpit, but left the time to me. The everlasting day of the Eternal God was proclaimed that day, and the Everlasting truth was largely declared, which reached and entered into the hearts of the people, and many received the truth in the love of it.” Fox says, at Cockermouth, “the soldiers told them we had broken no law,” 1653. At Malton, in 1651, Fox says, “I was, therefore, much desired to go and speak in the steeple-houses.” “And many of the priests by this time did invite George Fox and others to preach in their steeple-houses; but after they saw what it tended to bring them out of—their outward temple and tythes, and to preach Christ and his Gospel freely—then both priests and Ranters were very angry.”† Again we are told, “One of the priests wrote to me, and invited me

* “Short Journal of George Fox”—probably in 1651.

† MSS. at Devonshire House—“How the Lord by His Power and Spirit did raise up Friends,” p. 18. This MSS. appears to be written by one of the early Friends.

to preach in his steeple-house." At Boutle, on Sunday afternoon, in 1652, Fox "came in while the priest was preaching, and all the Scriptures he spake were of false prophets, and deceivers, and antichrists, and he brought them *and threw them down upon us.* I sat me down and heard till he had done. So when he had done I began to speak to him, and he and the people began to be rude, and the constable stood up and charged peace amongst them, in the name of the Commonwealth, and all was quiet, and I took his Scriptures that he spake of, false prophets, and antichrists, and deceivers, and threw them back upon him, and let him see that he was in the very steps of them, and *he began to oppose me.* I told him his glasse (*i.e.* the hour glass) *was gone, his time was out,* the place was *as free for me as for him,* and he accused me that *I had broke the law,* in speaking to him in his time *in the morning.* (Fox had spoken in this case in the morning, in "*his time,*" because "*he uttered such wicked things,*" "*and for truth's sake I was moved to speak to him, if I had been imprisoned for it.*" This was under special provocation, and Fox admits he acted illegally.) "*And I told him he had broken the law then in speaking in my time.*"* In this case there was no disturbance, and he "*had a brave meeting in the steeple-house.*"

Margaret Killam writes to George Fox—date about 1653. "I was moved of the Lord to go to Cambridge, and I went by Newarkside, and was at a meeting upon the First-day there, and I was moved to go to the steeple-house, and I was kept in silence whilst their teacher had done, and he gave over in subtily a little, and *after began again,* thinking to have *ensnared me,* but in the wisdom of God I was

* Short Journal of George Fox.

preserved, and did not speak till he had come down out of the place, for he did seek to have ensnared me, as it was related by his hearers, and (he) said "that I was subtil." The congregation was "very silent and attentive to hear, and did confess it was the truth that was spoken to them, and was troubled that their teacher had fled away." It was the same that did imprison Elizabeth Hooton (mentioned in Fox's Journal as the first woman minister in the Society of Friends) and did ensnare her by his craft, and he had told them that "if any came and spoke in meekness he would hear." *

From Kingston-on-Thames Burroughs writes to Fox, in 1657. Burroughs was at a public "General" meeting, which attracted a large number of people; he writes—"About the second hour came another officer and told me that the magistrates gave way for me to come into their meeting (they had previously been apprehensive on account of the numbers, lest the peace should be endangered), and object if I could, and about the third hour I passed out of our meeting (leaving Friends quiet in their own meeting) into their steeple-house, none at all with me except one. I heard the man preach, not the fourth part of an hour till he had ended, and liberty given by him for any to object that could. So all was quiet, and I having gathered several heads of his words into my mind, which were damnable doctrine, I soberly pitched upon one particular, which shamed him in the sight of all honest people. So that in the fourth part of an hour he desired the magistrates to dismiss the people; but they being sober, he ran away out of his pulpit, and I stayed till the magistrates rising up (the priest being gone) and bade me depart. So in a very little

* "Swarthmore Papers."

time I did, with much advantage and renown to the truth." Personally, however, his reward was small, for the magistrates in the evening tendered him the oath of abjuration, because "they did know and find him to be a man of parts, and therefore did groundedly suspect him to be a Jesuit!"

At Cockermouth Fox had appointed a meeting, and "the people having notice, and had not seen me before that, there came above a thousand people, which was like a horse fair, and they were got into a tree to hear and see, and so a professor asked me if I would go into the church, as he called it, and I said yes. And so I went in, and the people was got up into the pulpit," &c. This was no solitary instance; the churches in those days were used as public buildings for every variety of public purpose. The sessions were occasionally held in them,* and Fox was repeatedly invited on week days to preach in the church instead of the open air. There does not appear in either the published autobiography of Fox, or the manuscript "Short Journal," from which we have quoted,† or any of the Swarthmore papers, the slightest evidence that there was any violation of the rights of a congregation of worshippers or of the law, while the distinction made between an interruption of the preacher, and speaking "after the priest had done," is so clearly defined as to leave little or no doubt that the first was considered an improper and illegal action, and the second as in accordance with the proprieties of the

* At Pickering, "Sewel's History."

† Which may be taken to be the first MS. of Fox's Journal, probably handed about among his friends, expressed in Fox's own language, without those corrections by the editor, Thomas Ellwood, and by a committee to which Fox's Journal was subjected. It is believed that the original MS. of George Fox's Journal, as published, is in the hands of Robert Spence, Esq., of North Shields. By the kindness of its possessor, the author was able to inspect it. It is to be regretted that the earlier portions are missing; the rest appears to be perfect.

time, and strictly legal. It may also be generally observed that Fox was not indicted for disturbing congregations met for the worship of God, but for "broaching of divers blasphemous opinions, contrary to a late Act of Parliament," * such as the Arminian doctrine, that "Christ died for all men," and other matters then denounced as heresies of the deepest dye; and it was a matter of great difficulty for preachers who differed from the prevailing theological views, to avoid offending, either in reality or by misconstruction, against the provisions of this Act.†

* See "Sewel," 1650, and "Fox's Journal"—Mittimus to the Master of the House of Correction in Derby.

† For the preventing of the growing and spreading of heresies, Heads of an ordinance presented to the House of Commons, twice read and referred to a committee, 1646.—"King's Pamphlets."

"That all who should willingly preach, teach, or print, or write, publish, or maintain any such opinion contrary to the doctrines ensuing, viz.:—The omnipresence of God, the Trinity, denial of the Resurrection, or that Christ is not the Son of God, &c., if he abjures not his error, *shall suffer death!*"

"That all who publish any of the following errors, shall be ordered to renounce the said errors in the parish church, and if this is not done, he is to be committed to prison by the Justice, until he find two sureties of subsidy men," &c.

"That all men shall be saved."

"That man hath free will to turn to God."

"That the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are not ordinances commanded by the word of God."

Or that ministers (*i.e.* Presbyterian ministers) or ordinances, are not true ministers or ordinances.

Or that church government by presbytery is antichristian or unlawful.

Or that the use of arms "for public defence (be the cause never so just) is unlawful."

In 1648 an ordinance of the Lords and Commons was published, which provided the penalty of Death for the following Religious Errors, *viz.* :—

The denial of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence of God. The doctrine of the Trinity. The manhood of Christ, or to maintain "that the Godhead and Manhood of Christ are several natures," or to deny "that the Humanity of Christ is pure and unspotted of all sin." "That Christ did not die nor rise from the dead, nor ascend into heaven bodily," or "that shall deny his death to be meritorious on the behalf of Believers; or that shall maintain and publish, as aforesaid, that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, or that the Holy Scriptures is not the Word of God, or that the bodies of men shall not rise again after they are dead, or that there is no Day of Judgment after death." If he did not abjure these errors, he was to *suffer death.*

But we have distinct and positive testimony, that on the Restoration, when the Church of England resumed its position as established by law, the preachers of the Society of Friends did not attempt to preach after the priest of the Church of England had finished his sermon.* A pamphlet, written by Anne Docwra, a woman of good sense and

The penalty for the following Errors was milder. The person convicted was to renounce his said Errors in the parish church, or if he did not do so, was to be committed to prison until he found two sureties that he should not publish these Errors any more:—

- “That all men shall be saved.”
- “That man hath by nature free will to turn to God.”
- “That God may be worshipped in or by pictures or images.”
- “That the soul of man goes to purgatory after death.”
- “That the soul of man dieth or sleepeth when the body is dead.”
- “That Revelation or the Workings of the Spirit, are a Rule of Faith, or Christian Life, though diverse from, or contrary to the written Word of God.”
- “That man is bound to believe no more than by his reason he can comprehend.”
- “That the moral law of God, contained in the ten Commandments, is no rule of Christian life.”
- “That a Believer need not repent or pray for pardon of sins.”
- “That the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, are not ordinances commanded by the Word of God.”
- “That the baptizing of infants is unlawful, or such Baptism is void, or that such persons ought to be baptized again, and in pursuance thereof, shall baptize any person formerly baptized.”
- “That the observation of the Lord’s day is not enjoined by the ordinances and laws of this Realm, is not according to, or contrary to, the Word of God, or that it is not lawful to join in public prayer or family prayer, or to teach children to pray.”
- “That the churches of England are no true churches, nor their ministers and ordinances true ministers and ordinances, or that the church government by presbytery is anti-christian or unlawful, or that the power of the magistrate is unlawful, or that all use of arms though for the public defence (and the cause be never so just) is unlawful.”

It will be seen that in the first Act some of the special views of Fox are punished by an ordinance passed in 1646, *i.e.*, *two years before Fox began to form churches*, which clearly proves that such views had been promulgated *long prior to* 1646, and also, that prior to the Act of 1648, such views were common.

* It may be possible to adduce a few instances of the interruption of a Church of England or a Dissenting congregation by a member of the Society of Friends, after 1660 or 1661, but the practice was entirely abandoned.

ability, who, before becoming a member, was a Royalist and Episcopalian, who lived at Cambridge, furnishes this important link in the evidence. She says, "I never heard that Quakers, so called, disturbed the Episcopal clergy in their worship by going in amongst them."* She tells us that at the time when Friends went into churches, "the Common Prayer Book was tied to the troopers' horses' tails in some places; this made sport for those priests (the Presbyterians) who clamoured against it." We may fairly infer from the change in the practice of the early preachers of the Society, that they considered the preaching "after the priest had done," in the Presbyterian worship, allowable on Presbyterian principles.

It will be recollect that when Edward Irving appeared before the presbytery of London, in 1832, to defend among other alleged irregularities, his having allowed certain persons to "prophesy" in his congregation after the sermon, he pleaded that he had acted in strict accordance with the canons of the Presbyterian church. He contended that the Westminster confession did "not supersede" "the First Book of Discipline,"† and that the

* "Second part of the Apostate Conscience Exposed," p. 22.—T. Sowle, London, 1700. This is corroborated by Baxter, in his Autobiography, although he attributes it to fear. The conduct of Fox and the preachers, who were shortly nearly all in prison, entirely precludes such an interpretation.

† "The First Book of Discipline of the Church of Scotland," drawn up in accordance with a Charge from the Great Council of Scotland, dated April 29, 1560.

Chap xii.—"For prophesying or interpreting the Scriptures."

Head 2.—"This exercise is a thing most necessary for the Kirk of God, this day, in Scotland, for thereby, as said is, shall the Kirk have judgment and knowledge of the graces, gifts, and utterances of *every man within their body*—the simple and such as have somewhat profited—shall be encouraged daily to study and proceed in knowledge, and the whole Kirk shall be edified. For this exercise must be patent to such as list to learn, and *every man* shall have liberty to *utter and declare his mind* to the comfort and consolation of the Kirk.

exercise of prophesying was expressly permitted and even encouraged by the Kirk, and that it was left to "the judgment" of "the ministers and elders" "what day of the week is most convenient for that exercise." This "prophesying" was to take place in the order laid down by Paul, in the epistle to the Corinthian Church, and it was allowed for the second and third speaker "to add" what the first "had omitted;" to "gently correct," or "explain more properly when *the whole verity was not revealed to the former;*" he was "to use no invective in that exercise unless it be of *sobriety in confuting heresies.*"* Irving asks the question of the Presbytery, "Can anyone say it is contrary to the Ordinances of the Reformed Church of Scotland so to do?" And if he could thus speak (in 1832) does not this account for the fact, that Fox and the preachers in connection with him, almost systematically made use of this opportunity, "after the preacher had done," of "gently correcting," and "explaining more properly when the whole verity" did not seem to them to be "revealed" to the Presbyterian minister? If they erred sometimes in "gentleness," the Kirk certainly often erred in gentleness to them, contrary to the express provisions of the Book of Discipline, which provides that if "strange doctrines are

Head 3.—Provides against abuse. The speakers "may use no invective, unless it be of sobriety in confuting heresies."

Head 6.—What day in the week is most convenient for that exercise? . . . We refer to the *judgment of every particular Kirk*, we mean to the judgment of the ministers and elders.

The "Book of Common Order," or the Order of the English Church at Geneva, whereof John Knox was minister, approved by that famous and learned man, John Calvin, and used by the Reformed Kirk of Scotland, &c., 1558, says. . . . At the which time (*i.e.* of prophesying) it is lawful for every man to speak and enquire as *God shall move his heart.*"

* Quoted by Edward Irving, see Appendix to Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Irving, vol ii., 1862.

broached, the persons being called into the Assembly of Ministers, the faults, if any notable be found, are noted, and the persons *gently* admonished.”*

The evidence of the uninterrupted preaching of the early ministers of the Society, in the churches, might be multiplied to a very great extent. Edward Burrough frequently mentions his preaching in churches in 1654, in London. He says, “I was at a steeple-house in the forenoon, and had free liberty to speak.” Again he “spoke for an hour” in a public steeple-house in “Lombard Street, where most of the high notionists in the city come,” and afterwards Howgill spoke, and they “passed away in peace.”† When R. Hubberthorne visited the Eastern Counties in 1655, he says he “staid all day in the steeple-house with the people,” and that “on the same day James Parnell was in another steeple-house, where the priest suffered him to speak.”‡

But in a work published in 1653, by four Presbyterian ministers in Newcastle, we have the whole subject cleared up, except as it relates to the rights of the laity in the use of churches. Not only does it show us that the early Friends, the Baptists, and Independents had a clear legal right to preach in the churches, but that such preaching, if *after* the Presbyterian minister had *finished his sermon*, was *not deemed by the Presbyterians themselves* an interruption of public worship. They ask, why, if the Quakers are “under such powerful impulses of the Spirit that they cannot hold, we desire to know how they *can now of late forbear till our public worship and exercises be concluded?* At their first breaking forth it was otherwise, but since they have found that their speaking *in the time* of our

* “First Book of Discipline,” 4th section of chap. xii.

† Letter to Margaret Fell. Caton MSS. ‡ Ibid.

public work is *punishable by law*,* they can now be silent till we have closed up the work." This, they say is a "politick proceeding,"† and we may add that the evidence of such speaking in interruption of the service, proves it to have been rare, even prior to 1653, and may fairly be excused on

* This law was 1st year of Mary, second sessions—an Act against offenders and preachers, and other ministers in the church, against "disturbing a preacher, by word or deed, *in his sermon*"—the penalty was imprisonment for three months. By the 19th year of Elizabeth, cap. 12, it is clear that a layman, who has "a special gift and ability to be a preacher," professing "the doctrine expressed" in the 39 Articles, could, with the license of the Bishop of the Diocese, preach in a parish church; and it appears that on the abolition of the Episcopal system, *the power of allowing a layman to preach in a church, lay, in the Commonwealth times, with the magistrate.** The law was thus propounded in 1652:—

"Eighthly. If any of his own authority shall willingly, and of purpose, by open and direct word or deed, maliciously or contemptuously molest, or by any other unlawful ways, disquiet or abuse any preacher lawfully authorized, *in his preaching* or divine service, or irreverently handle the sacrament, &c. Such persons, their aiders and abettors, may, immediately after the thing done, be forthwith arrested by the constable, the officers, or any other person then present, and carried to a justice of the peace, to be proceeded with according to the Statute 1 M. chap. 6, p. 13. The office and duty of churchwardens, overseers of the poor," &c., by William Sheppard, Esq., London, 1652.

But the laity appear to have had a legal right to *the use of the churches*, which was then exercised, and we cannot but believe that the free use of the churches during this period may be traced to this. Baxter, in an address to members of Parliament, recommends that the† "*public places*" (i.e., *the churches*), as well as "*maintenance, be only for the approved* (i.e., Presbyterian ministers,) and *none to have leave to preach in those places called churches without the minister's consent.*" We think the inference explains the subject very clearly, viz., that with consent of the proper authorities (probably the magistrates), the churches might be used for preaching and discussion by the laity, and that the churches were *not for the use of the ministers alone*. This explains why the magistrates gave consent, and were appealed to for leave.

* Mr. W. Erbury, M.A., a Seeker, had liberty from the magistrates of Bristol, to preach at Nicholas Church, Bristol; "the parson, R. Farmer, stole the keys," and kept the church doors fast, till by authority, they were opened. Page 2—"Jack Pudding presented to Mr. R. Farmer, Parson of Nicholas Church, Bristol," by W. Erbury, 1654—598 K 1 Brit. Museum.

† "Humble Advice, or the Heads of those Things which were offered to many Honourable M.P.s," by Richard Baxter, 1655. 628 K 1 Brit. Museum, 10th Head.

+ "The Perfect Pharisee under Monkish Holiness," &c., by Thomas Weld, R. Prideaux, Samuel Harwood, W. Cole, and William Durrant, ministers in Newcastle. London, 1653, p. 47.

the ground suggested by their most violent opponents, viz., that they were not then aware of the law, and under circumstances oftentimes of peculiar provocation interrupted the speaker—a circumstance not unfrequent in these times of extreme civil and religious excitement, when the State interfered to prevent ministers of the Church of England from “disturbing, molesting or hindering” the Presbyterian minister, or aiding, or abetting, or engaging in “tumults or outrages” against him.*

John Bunyan held disputations with preachers of the Society, in Bedford steeple-house. In one discussion of this kind, Baxter tells that he “felt it to be his duty to be there also.” “I took the reading pew, and *Pitchford's Cornet and the troopers the gallery*, and I alone disputed against them from morning to night; for I knew their trick, that if I had gone out first they would have prated what boastful words they listed when I was gone, and made the people believe that they had baffled me!”† Baxter also appointed the church as a place of dispute with the Quakers.‡ In 1641 a Brownist preached in St. Sepulchre’s church.§

In Edwards’ “Gangrœna” there is abundant evidence that it was, even in 1645, before the rise of the Society of Friends, the custom to stand up after the preacher had done, e.g., “John Hitch came to Harridge church, and after John Warren, the minister, had ended his morning sermon only. . . . J. H. said that the minister had preached contradictions.”|| Many other instances might be given, to show that this practice was then becoming common. “Our Brethren in London” (i.e., the Independents), says Baillie,¶ “are for this exercise,” (i.e., the

* See first note, p. 274. † “Baxter’s Autobiography,” Sylvester, p. 36. ‡ Ibid. p. 38.

§ “King’s Pamphlets,” 37-1. || “Gangrœna,” part i., p. 70.

¶ “Baillie’s Dissuasive,” p. 175.

exercise of prophesying), “but especially to hold a door open for them to preach in parish churches where they neither are, nor ever intend to be, pastors; only they preach as *gifted men* and *prophets*, for the conversion of those who are to be made members of their congregations.”*

Baxter says there were “few of the Anabaptists that have not been the opposers and troublers of the faithful ministers of the land” (*i.e.*, of the Presbyterians). “On the 27th day of the ninth month, Henry Denne (the celebrated General Baptist preacher) declared the proceedings at Hawson. There was mention of a promise that I should go to Hawson the next First-day, and accordingly on the 19th day of this present month, I went thither, and on the next day, it being the first day of the week, the priest and chiefest men of the town sent to me to come and preach in the public place (*i.e.*, the church). Whereupon I went, intending to have spoken there unto the people, but as soon as I began to speak, the rude multitude gathered together, and would not suffer me to speak. . . . Whereupon I departed from them, and I spake in a private house.”†

Edwards mentions‡ that Lamb (of Bell Alley Church, of the General Baptists) “preaches sometimes (when he can get into pulpits) in our churches.” On 5th November, 1644, he preached at Gracechurch, in London, “where he had mighty audiences, and preached universal grace.” Hansard Knollys§ preached “in the churchyard when he could not in the church, and getting up into the pulpits, when the sermon or lecture had been ended, against the will of the minister, so that there were several riots and tumults by his means. He was complained against for

* See pp. 158 and 159, and especially the third note.

† The Fenstanton Baptist Church Records, General or Arminian Baptists.

‡ “Gangrœna,” part i., p. 92. § Ibid. p. 97.

this to a committee of Parliament, but he got off from that committee." Kiffin handed a letter to Edwards in the pulpit,* asking leave "to declare against what you say when your sermon is ended."

On the 14th July, 1648, Edward Barber, a celebrated General Baptist, spoke at the "parish Meeting-house of Bentfinck," London. Several of the inhabitants of the parish had invited Mr. Barber to come, promising that he should have liberty to add to what he (Mr. Calamy) should deliver, or contradict if erroneous. "I desired," says Mr. Barber, "him and the rest of the audience to add some few words." Upon which he (Calamy) desired me to "forbear till he had concluded, and I *might speak*." Mr. Barber then complains that he dealt with him, as Calamy had before dealt with Mr. Kiffin, Mr. Knowles, and Mr. Cox, and charged him with "coming to make a disturbance in the Church of God." Mr. Barber was then sadly handled by the audience, who cried, "Kill him! kill him! pull him limb from limb!" and "a woman scratched his face." A constable, however, interfered in his favour, or he "*might have been robbed or murdered*." Some of the audience, however, spoke kindly to him, and wished him to "go to Mr. Calamy's house" and be satisfied, but Mr. Barber says that after this treatment he "*was satisfied* that they were all anti-christian ministers."† In the title Mr. Barber states, that "*according to the Protestation*

* "Gangroena," p. 108.

† "A Declaration and Vindication of the carriage of Mr. Edward Barber, at the parish meeting-house of Benetfinck, London, Friday, 14th February, 1648. After the morning exercise of Mr. Calamy was ended, wherein the pride of the ministers and Babylonish carriage of the hearers is laid open, &c. . . . as also the false aspersions cast upon him, he doing nothing but what was according to the primitive institution, and *is*, and ought to be, in the best reformed churches *according to the Protestation and Covenant*."

and Covenant," the exercise of prophesying ought to be allowed by the Presbytery.

"On February 2nd, Oates his company (with some of the town of that faction), when the ministers had done, went up in a body (divers of them having swords), into the upper part of the church (at Billericay) and then quarrelled with the minister who preached. . . . They took occasion to speak to the people, and to preach universal grace and other of their erroneous doctrines for almost an hour."

"Lawrence Clarkson, a Seeker, author of the 'Pilgrimage of Saints,' a 'taylor and blasphemer,' preached on the Lord's-day at Bow Church, Cheapside. This was not done in a corner, but in a great and full audience. There was present at this sermon one member of the House of Commons, besides divers other persons of quality and yet he was never questioned, or called to account for this."*

There can be no doubt that the Independents, as the party in power, had a considerable influence in causing the Presbyterians to concede this liberty of "prophesying" after the priest had done. The Independent and Baptist churches, at this period, unquestionably permitted and encouraged this practice. We have alluded to the English churches in Holland, and have shown that it was one of their distinctive practices, and maintained not only by the churches of Ainsworth,† Johnson, Robinson, and Smyth, but also by the Dutch Reformed Churches. There is a large amount of evidence, to show that Fox and the preachers who associated themselves with him, almost uniformly attended the Independent and Baptist churches

* "Gangroena," part ii. p. 7.

† See second note, p. 101.

in the course of their travels, and (to use the expression in a Baptist pamphlet) "claimed the right, or privilege of prophesying," in the usual period allotted to both members of the church and strangers. In some of these churches they were received with cordiality, in some their preaching was respectfully listened to, and in none do we read of their being persecuted or haled out of the assemblies. In some cases a question arose whether they should be heard or not. The following is an account given by Morgan Watkins (probably an Independent) who was present at a meeting of "the people called Independents," at the house of the "aforesaid Col. James." "The same morning Thomas Parish came hither, and after several of the speakers had spoke in the meeting, he began to declare the mysteries of the kingdom of God to the meeting, in great authority and power, in so much that some confessed after that their flesh trembled on their bones." "Their priests* being asked, after meeting, what their judgment was of the stranger's testimony, they said that he spake nothing but what was consonant with the Scriptures. Though some of them, hearing that a man called a Quaker was to be at the meeting, did conclude that they should not suffer him to speak; but one of the meeting told them that that was from a bad spirit, to judge a man's testimony before they heard him speak, and contrary to the order of the church of Christ, and *the constitution of that meeting, which was that all might speak their experiences of the work of salvation, or any measure of it wrought in them.*" †

In an important tract entitled "Ancient Truth revived,

* This implies that in addition to their being pastors of an Independent church they held livings and were State ministers.

† MSS. in Devonshire House Library—"An account of the first publication of the truth in and about Leominster, in the county of Hereford."

or a true state of the ancient suffering church of Christ, commonly but falsely, called Brownists, living in London and other places of this nation,"—London, 1677, which shows clearly, that the most ancient branch of the Independents still existed, and had churches in London and elsewhere, we have it laid down, that "after the pastor hath read some part of Holy Scripture, giving the sense of the same with what else as doctrine as the time shall permit, the Teacher (in each church there were two officers under these names exercising the function now embodied in one pastor) shall deliver, and by the wisdom given him, applying the same to the consciences of the hearers. Fourthly, the men members exercise their gifts in prophesying according to the *ability given them by God*, by two, or three, at the most." Again (page 15) "so that the gifts and graces the Lord bestoweth on his church may not be hid in the earth, or covered with a bushel, but magnified." It is added, after stating that this exercise tends to the training up young men for pastors, "And thus, when *God's way* is taken for the fitting of men in God's own time and order for the work of the ministry, they need not, as many do, take a contrary way to make ministers of the Gospel by human art, in the knowledge, only of the tongues, as though the gifts and graces of God could be purchased for money," although they admit that "when God is pleased to call men of such parts, sanctified by the gracious work of His Spirit, to the ministry, it may bring God much glory in its place, but not that it makes men fit for ministers." *

* "Baptism," it adds, "is the pouring of His Spirit upon persons, and not by dipping." Water baptism is by *pouring* or sprinkling, and agreeth with Spiritual baptism. The striking coincidence between this statement, made by a minister of a Brownist church, as late as 1677, and the views of Fox, will be noticed by the reader, as well as the general practice of the exercise of prophesy in the Independent churches.

The strength of the Independent and Baptist churches lay in the development of lay preaching, and the distinction between their views and those of the Presbyterians is well shown in the letter of Dundas, dated 9th September, 1650, to Cromwell, and in his reply. "The ministers of the Scotch Kirk" are sorry they have such cause to regret that "men of mere civil place and employment should usurp the calling and employment of the ministry." Cromwell replies, 12th September, 1650. "We look at ministers as helpers of, not lords over, God's people. I appeal to their consciences whether any 'person' trying their doctrine, and dissenting, shall not incur the censure of 'Sectary?' And what is this, but to deny Christians their liberty and assume the infallible chair? What doth he whom we would not be liken to, the Pope, do more than this? Are you troubled Christ is preached? Is preaching exclusively your function? Where do you find in the Scriptures a ground to warrant such an assertion, that preaching is exclusively your function? Though an approbation from men hath order in it and may do well, yet he that hath no better warrant than that, hath none at all. I hope He, that hath ascended up on high, may give his gifts to whom He pleases, and if those gifts be the seal of mission, be not envious, though Eldad and Medad prophesy. You know who bids us covet earnestly the best gifts, but chiefly that we may prophesy, which the apostle explains there, to be a speaking to instruction, edification, and comfort; which speaking, the instructed, the edified, and comforted, can best tell the effect of, and say whether it is genuine."* Cromwell, with his usual skill, turns the flank of the objection of the Presbyterian ministers to lay preaching, by

* Carlyle's "Letters of Oliver Cromwell," p. 207 to 211.

alluding to the exercise of prophesying, which we have already seen, was permitted to laymen by the First Book of Discipline of the Kirk. A sentence in the previous letter to Dundas, sums up the view Fox, as well as Cromwell, took of the Westminster Assembly, and both the Scotch and English Presbyterian ministers. "When ministers pretend to a glorious reformation, and lay the foundations thereof in getting to themselves worldly power, and can make worldly mixtures to accomplish the same . . . they may know that the Sion promised will not be built with such untempered mortar."

A very large number of the Baptists' meetings may generally be said to have been thrown open to Fox and the early preachers of the Society of Friends. The relation between the Baptists and the "Children of Light," as Fox's followers then called themselves, was at this period more friendly than somewhat later, when Baptists and Independents, by taking State maintenance, became "Baptist and Independent priests," and had "Independent steeple-houses;" and when many of their pastors had begun to have a leaning towards the good things the State had to bestow, and to hope, that in due time, with a good conscience, they might enjoy them, and thus make "the best of both worlds."* The Baptists allowed the use of their meeting rooms, and in the large number of instances mentioned in various manuscripts which have been inspected, they appear to have often facilitated or desired the presence of Fox and the

* "Life of Caton," p. 26, contains an account of the welcome received at an "*Independent steeple-house*"—"their steeple-houses." They were "sent to the House of Correction;" "had their money, inkhorns, and bibles taken from them; were stripped, had their necks and arms put in the stocks, and in that condition were "desperately whipped," and afterwards "had irons and great clogs of wood laid on us;" but even here, "the chief agent in cruelty was a noted Presbyterian."

early preachers, and even when their ministry could not have been acceptable, from its strong Arminian tone, they were courteously treated and no complaint appears to have been made of them as intruders.* We have found no evidence of any attempt on the part of the early preachers to abuse the liberty granted them, or of the slightest interruption of the worship. It was not uncommon for the Society preachers to attend the "General Meetings" of both Independents and Baptists—assemblies of a number of churches, which appear to have lasted several days—and at which they appear to have been welcome to preach. Indeed, they occasionally heightened the interest of the proceedings, by inducing their friends to adjourn to the nearest church, where all parties enjoyed a pitched battle, the approach of evening at last separating the combatants. Among the General Baptists it was a rule, "that it shall be lawful for any person to improve their gifts in the presence of the congregation." † They "prophesied by turns" in their own meetings, and in Featly's work, they are charged not only with "defyling our rivers with their impure washings," but also, like the preachers of the Society of Friends, "so defyling our pulpits with their false prophesies and phanatical enthusiasms." ‡ They held, like the Society of Friends, "the damnable doctrines" "that civil states, with their officers of justice, are not governors or defenders of the spiritual state of worship, and that the

* See note supra, p. 292. Caton says, "I went to a steeple-house of the Independents, there are many high airy spirits as ever I met with. Oh! who is sufficient to encounter with such a generation!!! He "had *as much* liberty among the Baptists as I could desire."

† "Fenstanton Church Records," p. 78.

‡ The word "prophesies" no doubt alludes to preaching "after the priest had done." Fox objected, when asked to do so, to come up into the pulpit, but such scruples troubled only a section of the Baptists.

doctrine of persecution in case of conscience, was guilty of all the blood of the souls crying under the altar," and that "a permission should be granted of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or anti-christian consciences." In the year 1645, these General Baptists, Featly tells us, were guilty of similar views and practices. His account of the state of things immediately preceding the rise of the Society of Friends, is so characteristic, that we insert it.* This outburst of lay preaching, this "clergy of laics," appears to him one of the most fearful signs of the times. "The apostle cries out, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' but now we may say 'who is *not* sufficient for these things?' Not the meanest artizan, not the illiteratest day labourer, but holds himself sufficient to be a master builder in Christ's church. But now, in the noontide of the Gospel, such owls and bats should fly abroad everywhere, and *flutter in our churches . . .* and not either be caught and confined to their nests in barns or rotten trees, or put in cages fit for such night birds. On such a day, such a Brewer's clerk exerciseth (probably the eminent Baptist preacher Kiffin, a man of the highest character, and fitted both by his piety, ability, and success, for the service of the Gospel), such a Tailor expoundeth, such a Waterman teacheth." "What is coming to us," cries Featly, "if *cooks* (with Demosthenes), instead of mincing their meat, fall upon dividing of the word;" "if *tailors* leap up from the shop-board to the pulpit, and patch up sermons out of stolen shreds."

It appears to have been said, in vindication of these illiterate preachers, respecting Featly and his clerical friends, that the "*prophets*" had "become *so mad*," that

* "The Dipper Dipt, or the Anabaptists ducked and plunged over head and ears," &c., by Daniel Featly, D.D., London, 1651, sixth edition, originally published 1645.

"the *ass's* mouth must needs be opened to reprove them ;" but Featly says that "the case is different," for "there the ass saw the angel, but here the angels (*i.e.* the regularly ordained ministers) see the asses in their places !"

The General Baptists told Featly "that they did not read of any such distinction in the Word of God between laymen and clergymen." "God conferring gifts was a sufficient calling ;" that "it was as lawful to worship God in a private house, or to preach there, as in one of your steeple-houses." It is important to notice the views of these Arminian Baptists in reference to verbal inspiration. They appear to have some connection with the views of Fox, if we consider that Featly has a little overstated their views. *Anabaptist* : "Though we cannot prove the letter to be well translated, that matters not much, for the letter of Scripture is not Scripture." *Dr. Featly* : "That is blasphemy," &c. *Anabaptist* : "The letter of the Word of God is not Scripture without the revelation of the Spirit of God; the Word revealed by the Spirit is Scripture." "How did they know the Scripture to be God's word ?" they were asked ; and they were answered, "By experience."

We learn from Featly's work, that this General Baptist held "that men have free will, not only in natural or moral, but also in spiritual matters." "That they as well as other Separatists held, 'that no Christian may go to law, or in any case right himself by arms or violent means' (p. 34). That no Christian may lawfully take an oath; 'no, not if it be required by a magistrate.'" He complains (p. 184) of their confusing the different senses in which "prophesy" is spoken of in Scripture. Did they mean an "ordinary" or an "extraordinary" gift? He approved of Archbishop Grindal's "prophesying, but not for rude and illiterate mechanics." "For these extraordinary revelations they

pretend to, together with the miraculous gift of tongues and healing, for many hundred years have failed in the church."

It is important to notice this was three years before Fox commenced preaching. Such being their sentiments, we can readily understand how it was that the General Baptists, who were at this time far the most numerous portion of the Baptist churches, received Fox and his friends almost as readily as they did itinerant members of their own body. This was not the case among the Calvinistic Baptists, as we shall presently see.

It has been represented that the preaching of the early Ministers of the Society of Friends was not so much a simple preaching of the Gospel to the masses,* as an effort to change the opinions of gathered churches. This view will not bear a close examination. "We find," to use the words of four violent opponents, "no place hears so much of their religion as streets and market crosses."† They were wilfully misrepresented, and they strove by means of their pamphlet literature, to answer, in the locality where the slander was spread, these misrepresentations of the press and the pulpit, and therefore we find a far more *one sided* theology in their pamphlet literature than they really held.

There can be no doubt that not only the Society of Friends, but every section of the Christian church in these times, attached undue importance to its own peculiar religious views, and that they lacked gentleness and

* "Question : Who are the best ministers? Answer : They may be said to be the best ministers who convert and turn most souls to God."—A paper used as a poster by Thomas Laythes, of Dailhead, in Cumberland, 1691, one of the early ministers. "Our endeavour is to call people out of their sins, *not in show*, but in reality, as many will witness."—"Answer to the Perfect Pharisee," &c., p. 29, 1653.

† "The Perfect Pharisee under Monkish Holiness," &c., by T. Weld, R. Prideaux, S. Hammond, and W. Cole, ministers in Newcastle, p. 50, London, 1653.

Christian charity in their treatment of those who differed from them. In the times of the Civil War and the Commonwealth, the spirit of Marston Moor, Naseby, and Dunbar, was transferred in all its intensity to the field of theological controversy. Can we wonder that they had not yet attained the grace of a perfectly just and temperate treatment of their theological adversaries? For centuries free religious discussion had been repressed by the dungeon, the rack, the halter, and by the fires at Smithfield and elsewhere. Are we, therefore, to blame the General Baptists, the Independents, and the early Friends, because they loved religious liberty too well, and because they dreaded the ascendancy of a persecuting priesthood, who sought the aid of the State simply to enforce their own decrees, while *they denied the right of the State to control the intolerance of their Church?* There were, therefore, sound and sufficient reasons for the position occupied by the Society of Friends towards the Presbyterian clergy. Fearful as were the sufferings and the injuries to the cause of true religion, resulting from the restoration of Episcopacy as the State Church, it can hardly be doubted that the establishment of the Presbyterian system would have set up an engine of spiritual tyranny only second to that of Popery.* The excesses of Episcopacy could be controlled by the State. The Presbyterians sought to set up a

* "And except they show all the lineaments of their Government derived naturally from Scripture, it will fright men's consciences and make them disclaim it for a monster. For the discipline, as now contended for, is, as was the Bishop's, but external, prudential, matter of form and policy; and it is looked upon as so much the more intolerable, if rigidly pressed, by how much it opens a *wider gap* for tyranny; because, if the Bishops made us groan under twenty-four dioceses, and but one High Commission, what will become of us under almost ten thousand Presbyteries, besides the torments of Classes Provincial, Juntas, Synods, and Assemblies."—"The Case of the Kingdom stated," &c., written by an Independent, 1647, pp. 4 to 16.

spiritual power which would have made the State the blind executioner of its decrees. There can be no question that Fox and his friends regarded this determined protest against the establishment of the Presbyterian church as a part of their *duty as preachers of the Gospel*. They believed the Christian Religion did not require the worldly props by which it was then thought needful to support it. They were men who were profoundly convinced that the risen Saviour was with His true Church. They condemned none whom *they* thought showed marks of His Spirit, and if they were at times mistaken, can we wonder if the ruin of their bodies in prison, and the plunder of their property, warped their judgment?

There are innumerable proofs that their preaching was addressed to the great masses of the people, and exercised a spiritual power similar to that of the Wesleys and Whitefield. They also used the expedient of what we should now call "Revival" and "Camp" Meetings, to arouse the careless, and stir up mere professors of religion, to the conviction of its spiritual reality. Occasionally this was carried to an extent, the wisdom of which may be doubted. It excited public attention in those times, in a way which would now attract but little notice, after the experience the religious world has since had of such meetings, both in England and America.

In 1653, a meeting was held at Malton, at which 200 persons "met to wait upon the Lord," and "did continue," writes Richard Farnsworth to Margaret Fell,* "three or four days together, and did scarce part day or night. I was with them. Twice the mighty power of the Lord was

* Swarthmore MSS.

made manifest. Almost *all the room was shaken.*"* So great was the impression made at Malton, that "the men of Malton burnt their ribbons and silk, and other fine commodities, because they might not be abased by pride."†

Their early preachers preached Bible in hand.‡ The sum of their preaching was, according to the account given of it in an ancient manuscript, that while in Adam all died, "all were concluded under sin; the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men," without exception. That Christ, "who tasted death for every man," did also "enlighten every man." That this light, which shineth in the heart, would give to all men "the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." God had not only spoken to us by His Son, 1650 years ago, but "now speaketh to people by His Son from Heaven." That "He gives the knowledge how Christ died for our sins, and is risen again for our justification, and washeth, and cleanseth His people with His blood." That "after they do believe, they are sealed with the Spirit of promise, and know that Christ the substance is come, and dwelleth in His people, by His Spirit."§ They held that the whole ceremonial law had been abolished, and that Christianity is not a religion of ceremonies. That Christ, by one offering, "hath perfected

* "Whether, when about Malton there are towards 200 or 300 neglected their callings, young and old, to compare notes of their entranced madness, it concerns not a Church, nay, a commonwealth, if it were no more than pagan, to look to it and prevent the growth of further mischief."—"The Querers' and Quakers' Cause at Second Hearing," London, 1653, pp. 44, 39 and 40.

† Ibid.

‡ "Priest Mousall, that day in Drayton churchyard, out of fury, struck Richard Farnsworth's Bible out of his hand."—"The Spiritual Man Judgeth all Things," 1656.

§ "How the Lord, by His Spirit, did raise up Friends to declare His Everlasting Gospel and Truth, and how it Spread," &c., from MS. Devonshire House Library.

for ever them that are sanctified,"* and "renews them up to the image of God, which man and woman had before they fell." . . . "Therefore all men are to look unto Him, and all that have received Him are to walk in Him, the Life, the Substance, the First and the Last, the Rock of Ages, the Foundation of many generations."† They used rough-and-ready illustrations in their preaching, and spoke plain truths to plain people, and "thundered" everywhere against sin, appealing to men's consciences in a way which Latin and Greek quotations, and elaborate sermons in the dry Puritan style could never do.

The views of Fox on the Atonement are thus expressed in his journal, and show that he held clear views upon this fundamental point, in 1645, when twenty-one years of age, before he commenced his career as a preacher. "This priest Stevens asked a question, viz., Why Christ cried out upon the Cross, 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? and why He said, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine, be done?' I told him, at that time the sins of all mankind were upon Him, and their iniquities and transgressions, with which He was wounded, which He was to bear, and be an offering for, as He was Man, but died not, as He was God. So that He died for all men, tasting death for every man; he was an offering for the sins of the whole world. This I spoke, being at that time in a manner sensible of Christ's sufferings. The priest said it was a good full answer, and such an one as he had not heard."‡ Fox wrote, in 1677, a

* "Being sanctified" (see Alford) *in loc.*

† "Fox's Journal," 1666.

‡ There has been an impression produced by some of Fox's utterances, that he did not hold the doctrine of "justification by faith only," but conceived that men were partly "justified by works." The tract to which we have referred will entirely remove this impression. We add the following quotation from a reply to a person who appeared

tract entitled, "A Testimony concerning Justification, and Whom Christ Justifies ; and in What, and Imputed Righteousness to What and to Whom;"* which is, in substance, as full, clear, and scriptural as anything which John Wesley wrote on this subject. In this tract he testifies that "God justifies the ungodly in the faith *which gives the victory over the ungodliness.* " "Christ died for the ungodly; not," he says, "that they should *live ungodly and unjustly all their life long,* but that they should live to Him that died for them, and walk in Him that is holy and just; *who turns them from their ungodliness,* and takes away their sins; for Christ died for all, Jews and Gentiles being all gone astray. So He died for the ungodly *when they were without strength.* And they have no Light, nor Life, nor Faith, nor Grace, nor Truth, nor Strength, but from Him that hath died for them, and shed His blood for them."

There was nothing, perhaps, which the early preachers denounced more than hypocrisy. They upheld a standard of *thorough-going Christian truthfulness*, and the carrying out the *spirit of Christianity* in daily conduct. They recommended people to use their Bibles, "not to dispute by, but to live by." The uncompromising manner in which they exposed the inconsistency of an age, when the outward garb and phraseology of religion were the fashion, could not fail to procure them hosts of enemies. The purity of their morals, and the strict integrity of their lives, were

to hold such views. It is taken from an original copy preserved in the Swarthmore collection, endorsed in George Fox's handwriting, "this professor ran into uncleanness." "George Fox, to R. Lukes of Upper Kellet, 1652—'Friend, thou wast speaking of being justified by works; alack, for thee! thy works will never justify thee in the sight of God, nor make but for the fire.'

* This has become rare; the only copy seen by the Author, is in the collection of F. Fry, of Bristol.

fully admitted by their adversaries, but were considered to have a Satanic origin.*

Men might denounce the doctrine of the fierce Independent, or the Baptist, but in these times it was dangerous to go too far; and the preacher, who had the high praises of God in his mouth, had a two-edged sword in his hand, and when the Presbyterian parsons denounced woes upon them, they laid their hands on their swords in the very churches. With the "Quakers" it was otherwise, and no calumny was too gross to pass current respecting them.† But if we consider the natural opposition of the human heart to an earnest, spiritually-minded, practical, and aggressive Christianity, and the position which they took, of determined opposition to the interests of a newly constituted clergy sitting uneasily in possessions obtained and held by the sword, and added to this, the offence given to the judicial element of the Commonwealth and Restoration, by the refusal to take civil oaths—their peculiarities of language, and their disuse of the customary titles of society in address, we shall hardly wonder that they had no friends. They sorely roused the intolerance of the age, but those whose sentiments are most opposed to them, will admit that many of their principles and doctrines, once denounced as the doctrines of hell, have been since declared, by the consent of the Christian world, to be the heavenly and beneficent principles of the Gospel.

The general character of the "priests" testified against by Fox, cannot be justly estimated by accepting Baxter's statement respecting them. Perhaps there is no point

* See "Broadmead Records," pp. 42, 43, and in many pamphlets of the times.

† A comparison of the calumnies to which the early Wesleyans were subjected in calmer times, will remove the impression that in some way all this abuse had been merited.—See Tyerman's "Life of Wesley," *passim*.

in which Baxter manifests himself a more thorough-going partisan, than in his attachment to the Presbyterian ministry. His extreme dislike to that party of the Independents and Baptists, and other sectaries, who, with the Society of Friends protested against the imposition of this new and intolerant ministry upon the country, renders him a prejudiced witness. The Independents whom he praises, appear to be those "who were fit for the service of the churches." The Independents and Baptists who remained faithful to their principles, and conscientiously refused to partake of the State maintenance, were those whom he decried and (however honestly) misrepresented. Thus the Presbyterian ministry to a large extent, appropriated the plunder which was mainly won by the valour of the Independents and Baptists, of whom by far the largest section remained faithful to their principles. The unanimous testimony of "the Friends" respecting the character of the Presbyterian ministry of the Commonwealth, has been too much set aside by historians. It was the testimony of men who had occupied important positions—men of great intelligence and irreproachable character, and who were *not interested in obtaining a share of the benefices of England*—and will, we think, when the subject is fairly investigated, greatly moderate the indiscriminate praise which has been extended to them, mainly upon the evidence of their friends. It will be seen, if the views of the much abused "Sectaries" are carefully and candidly examined, that "actually their enthusiasms," if well seen into, were not foolish, but "wise." (It is well to take Carlyle's advice, "By no means to credit the wide-spread report that these seventeenth-century Puritans were superstitious, crack-brained persons, given up to enthusiasm, the most part of them . . . the minor part being cunning men,

who knew how to assume the dialect of the others, and thereby as skilful 'Machiavels,' to dupe them." "This is a wide-spread report, but an untrue one." "He will be wise, to believe these Puritans do mean what they say, and to try unimpeded to discover what it is; gradually a very stupendous phenomenon may rise on his astonished eye, a practical world based on a belief in God." *)

*) "Carlyle's Letters," vol. i., p. 62.)

CHAPTER XIII.

EVANGELISTIC WORK OF THE PREACHERS IN CONNECTION WITH FOX, AT BRISTOL. PHYSICAL EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THEIR PREACHING SIMILAR TO THOSE PRODUCED SINCE AMONG THE WESLEYANS AND INDEPENDENTS. ANOTHER ACCOUNT OF THE RISE OF "QUAKERISM" AT BRISTOL. THE SUCCESS OF THE PREACHERS IN INFLUENCING "PROFANE" PEOPLE. "THE UPSTART LOCUST DOCTRINE" IS FOUND TO PRODUCE FAITHFULNESS, HONESTY, AND TRUTHFULNESS. "PUBLIC" AND "RETIRED" MEETINGS. RECORDS OF THE CHURCH AT BRISTOL.

WE shall now endeavour to give an idea of the nature of the evangelistic labour of the preachers in connection with Fox, by first turning our attention to Bristol, the second commercial city and port in the kingdom at that period. We shall afterwards allude to some points of great interest in the history of the Society of Friends, which will place the nature of the movement in a point of view from which it has not hitherto been contemplated.

Two able ministers took in hand this important city, John Audland and John Camm.* Let us hear their own account of the christian work in which they were engaged.† "There is here (at Bristol) a great work and large fields to

* We almost invariably find the preachers of the Society preaching in couples, and the analogy of this arrangement to the "Pastor" and "Teacher" of the Independent and Baptist churches of the time, who were then favoured with at least two sermons, cannot fail to strike the reader.

† Extracted from a letter of John Camm to George Fox, 1654 (probably September).

labour in. We have here in Bristol, most commonly 3000 to 4000 at a meeting. The priests and magistrates of the city begin to rage, but the soldiers (of the Commonwealth) keep them down; for the Governor of the Castle is not against us, and the Captain of the Royal Fort is absolutely convinced, and his wife loves us dearly.* And many captains and great ones of the city are convinced, and do believe in us, and that we are of God; and all within ten miles of the city round about, the people is very much desirous after Truth. . . . Yea, at *any point* (to which) we come, we can have 400, or 500, or even 1000 at any place we come. We have many friends in many towns about, who are honest and true in their measures, and eminent amongst men, so that we have many places in the country about, where we can set up a standard and have gathered meetings (*i.e.*, established churches), and *we hit some every day we shoot*, for 'our bow abides in strength.' . . . We much desired John Story and John Wilkinson to have come this way; here is great and gallant service. It is the day of the Lord's gathering. We shall leave it to *thee* (*N.B.* to Fox) and *their freedom*. . . . Thou may see the work; it is as great as I say, and likely to be more."

The said John Story and John Wilkinson we shall have again to mention, as sore troublers of the peace of the new Society at a later period. Audland had, prior to this, on the 12th of July, paid a visit to this city, and in conjunction with Thomas Airey, visited the Baptist church in Broadmead, and the Independent church in the Pithay. They also preached among "a Seeking people" (*i.e.*, a congregation of 'Seekers'), "who kept one day in the

* *i.e.* Captain Watson and Captain Beal, the chief commanders of the garrison and Royal Fort, "became Quakers," p. 48. "Sathan Enthroned in his chair of Pestilence, or Quakerism in its Exaltation," by Ralph Farmer, London, 1657.

week in fasting and prayer, not tasting anything; and before the day ended there might be twenty of them praying, men and women, and sometimes children." These people were "waiting for the visitation of God, and His day of redemption."

Audland and Camm paid another visit in September. Their first public meeting was held in a field close by Broadmead, called Earlsmead, where Audland preached a sermon to the assembled multitudes, "lifting up his voice like a trumpet,"* to all those who were "in the Fall," "separated from God" (of which among the Royalist rabble there were we may be quite sure, from contemporary history, a great many). To these he "opened the way of life," in "the mighty power of God," with such effect, that they were "seized in their soul," and "pricked at their heart;" and "some fell on the ground and foamed at the mouth, while others cried out, while the sense of their states of sin was opened to them." Meetings were held every day, the people followed the preachers everywhere, so that "every day was like one long meeting." People called upon the ministers to speak with them privately, "before they got up," and they were at work "from six o'clock in the morning, till eleven o'clock, or even one o'clock, at night." †

* "A Testimony to the Glorious Morning of the Day of Inexpressible Visitation of the Love of God to the City of Bristol," by Charles Marshall, 1689.

† "Swarthmore papers."—Camm and Audland, Letter from Bristol, to Burrough and Howgill, in London.—"The places of meeting were too strait, and the assemblies in the fields were multiplied to two, three, nay, to near four thousand people of all sorts, ranks, ages, and sexes; some of them as eminent as any in that city, in that which is called godliness, became obedient to the Truth, whose minds being turned to the Lord, witnessed the power and life of Jesus, and redemption within. . . . The priests were exceeding moved. The new Society asked the Mayor, &c., to try them by *the Scriptures*." See "The Cry of Blood," by G. Bishop and three others, London, 1656.

The early preachers of the Society were eminently successful when they preached to the rude multitude. Fox anticipated Wesley and Whitfield in his application of field preaching to the spreading of the Gospel, and we see all the features of the great Methodist revival both in the character and gifts of the preachers, the multitudes who listened to them, the powerful impressions produced, and the entire change of character which was permanently effected. The physical effects which are here noticed, were precisely the same as those which appeared 73 years later at Bristol, under John Wesley's preaching. It was here that Wesley tells us he "submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about 3,000 persons." "The scripture on which I spoke was this (is it possible any one should be ignorant that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor,'" &c. It was at Bristol, that "one that stood by cried aloud, as in the agonies of death; a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes sunk down to the ground." Sometimes Wesley's "voice could scarcely be heard amid the groans and cries." "They dropped on every side as thunderstruck." One of the peculiar features of these phenomena, was the shaking and trembling,* and we have it recorded, that at Bristol, a Quaker who was not a little displeased at "the dissimulation of these creatures," "dropped down as thunderstruck," and cried aloud, "now I know that thou art a prophet of the Lord." † He could

* Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i., chap. vii. "Wesley's Journal," *passim*.

† Ibid, 179, vol. i., Conference Edition.

hardly have been aware that the Church of which he was a member, in that very place was raised up under preaching which produced similar effects. A vivid and life-like narrative of the conduct of the early preachers, when these physical manifestations occurred under their preaching, which will compare very closely with similar accounts in "Wesley's Journal," is given in a rare tract, by an opponent of the new Society, which was published as early as 1653.* After giving a fearful and highly coloured account of these manifestations, which the writer compares to "epilepsy" or "apoplexy," he adds, they "lie grovelling on the earth, and struggling as if for life. . . . The speaker, when any fall into this fit, will say to the rest, 'Let them alone, trouble them not, the Spirit is now struggling with (the) flesh; if the Spirit overcome, it will be joy in the morning,' &c., and when they have said a few words to this effect, they go on with their speaking. . . . Sometimes they carry their wretched patients into beds that are near them, and let them lie till their fit is over." The writer adds, "I heartily believe these quakings to be diabolical raptures." The Friends appear to have treated the manifestations very rationally, and occasionally administered a cordial, or medicine of some kind; and this is commented upon in the tracts of the times as a circumstance of the utmost mystery, and a proof of "sorcery."† The preachers were, as a matter of course, required strictly to account for these "tremblings," &c., and on the same principle as their adversaries turned to the Bible to find an explanation of everything, they confidently did the same, and found, that as Moses "quaked," David "roared," and Jeremiah

* "A Brief Narrative of the Irreligion of the Northern Quakers," London, 1653.

† In one tract it is likened to "the water the Pythian she-priests drank of"!

"trembled," there was nothing in them which the children of God had not at times experienced, and it was then proclaimed that they had, so to speak, seriously adopted these physical manifestations as their own.

For an account of these hysterical fits in one of the Independent churches, we are informed in the "Early History of the Independent Church at Rothwell,"* Mr. Davis, the pastor, was charged with the "Black Art," it appeared, by some of his brethren. At the churches at Kimbolton and Wellingborough these fits also appeared, when the "affections" of the hearers "were most powerfully touched with any truth they heard." Under Jonathan Edwards' preaching, in New England, something of the kind also occurred. When we recollect that these manifestations were attributed to Satanic agency in the time of the Wesleys, we shall not be surprised to find in those earlier times, they were considered to be very striking proofs of Quakerism having a similar origin.

Modern medical science regards these physical manifestations as simply arising from the excitement of the nervous centres, under the influence of strong appeals to the emotions. The same effects are, as a matter of fact, produced among *heathens* as well as Christians. The irritation of certain nervous centres can be produced by the influence of fear, remorse, or any passion, as easily as by a probe or needle. The results differ according to different physical temperaments, and may take the form of epilepsy, mania, melancholy, convulsions, hysteria or trance. To say that Wesley or Audland, or any other preacher of the Gospel, was responsible for these results because he appeals powerfully to all the motives which influence the

* By N. Glass, pp. 85, 86, and 87.

human mind in a matter of so much importance as religion, would be most unjust; but with a full knowledge that these physical manifestations are symptoms of nervous disease—and disease, too, which is capable of being propagated from one person to another by sympathy—it is most important to avoid long protracted and exciting religious meetings. The experience of Wesley was, that the real religious benefit produced was generally in inverse ratio to the religious and physical excitement.

We have, in the records of the Baptist Church at Broadmead (pp. 42–51), a most interesting contemporary account of the preaching of Audland and Camm. The Baptist Church, sober-minded and excellent christian men of strong Calvinistic sentiments, were shocked by the irregular proceedings of these field preachers. “Their dangerous prodigious doctrines ‘took’ with some ignorant people that were not well acquainted with the sound principles of religion,” and some others “who had never yielded up themselves to the Lord, in His ways, to walk in the power of the truths they knew.” If we bear in mind that Audland was, before he joined Fox, “one of the greatest and most eloquent “Independent” preachers in the north of England,”* a man of good family and excellent education, that he was invited before he became connected with the Society, to preach in Churches, precisely as Fox was invited, and that he was a most pious and devoted christian man, we shall gain greater instruction from the narrative. Edward Terrill, who wrote this account, was also an “elder” of the Baptist church, engaged pretty constantly in preaching the gospel. Under the feelings excited by controversy, and by the fact that out of 79 members

* “Evans’ Memoirs of Audland,” Philadelphia, 1841, p. 476.

composing the Baptist church in Broadmead, no fewer than 19 left the church to join the Society established by Audland and Camm, and by the unquestionable success of the itinerant preachers, Terrill thus accounts for the rise of the Society of Friends. "Satan, seeing the abundance of light of reformation in this nation, envying the progress of the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, justification freely by His Grace, he transformed himself into an angel of light, and made use of Popish Jesuits to creep abroad, up and down in England. Under the guise of professors of Truth, they spread about many damnable errors and heresies, beguiling some unstable professors. Thereby Satan deceived *many profane people.*" * "These were deluded to embrace their upstart notions of Quakerism, under a pretence of a great degree of holiness, by hearkening to the 'Light' within, which they called Christ, laying aside the manhood of our blessed Redeemer." † "Whereas that Light is but the Light of nature, which in

* The mission of early Quakerism being specially to "profane people," the irreligious masses, who had been to a great degree neglected. In the church of Broadmead, it is evident that the members were generally respectable tradesmen and domestic servants. A. Parker writes, eighth and ninth month, 1659, after being three weeks up and down in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, to Fox thus: "Many sweet and precious meetings I have had, life and love is springing up, and the presence of the Lord is much manifested, which oftentimes melts my heart and draws forth my love unto *the poor and needy.*"

† This misapprehension is an instance of how a preacher, by insisting on a vital truth, which he conceives to have been misunderstood by his audience, is sometimes taken to deny other truths equally important. The substitution of an inward for an outward Christ, was certainly *no part* of Fox's teaching, although there were religionists, both at that period and previously, who denied the historical Christ. (See "Fenstanton Records," p. 45). These have been confused with the Friends. Some of the new Society were undoubtedly converts from the Ranters, and some of them expressed themselves in a way which was evidently unsatisfactory, and ambiguous to the Fenstanton Church. To represent "Christ's dying on the cross," to be "a mere history and a shadow," is not the doctrine held by any of the early Friends from the earliest date, whereas it is to be found everywhere in the writings of the Ranters. My friend Dr. Underhill concurs in this view.

common is planted in all mankind, the same with that the heathens and blackamores have, and the remotest Indians, which know not Christ nor never heard of Him ; and they omit the Light of the Word of the Lord, and the Light of God's Spirit, proceeding from the Father by the Word or Holy Scripture. Thus Smoke out of the Bottomless Pit arose, and the Locust Doctrine came forth, as it is written !!"* Rev. ix. 2, 3, 4.

Dennis Hollister, who had sat in Parliament for the city of Bristol, was a member of this Church, and it appears, had "sucked in some principles of this upstart locust doctrine, came home from London with his heart full of discontent and his head full of poisonous new notions. . . . About the time of his notions, there came to Bristol two men of strange principles (John Audland and Thomas Airey), and thrust themselves into the meetings of the church, and would put themselves forward to speak in their tone, judging and condemning all that did not as they did ; a spirit the church was not acquainted with, nor with their doctrines of devils." It will be observed that there is no complaint of their improper or disorderly conduct, in putting themselves forward to speak, only that the Broadmead church did not approve their doctrines ; and it will be seen also, that at first the dangerous character of their doctrines was not perceived by these good people. "And these persons Dennis received into his house, entertained

* We may fairly infer that these good people were greatly stumbled at the then, new and strange doctrine, that "Christ died for the sins of the whole world." Wesley and Fletcher held the same doctrine, and answered the objection "but if the heathen can be saved without the Gospel, what need is there of the Christian dispensation?" thus : Answer I. "None of them were ever saved without a beam of internal Light of the Gospel, which is preached in (EV) every creature under heaven," Col. i. 2, 3.—(Fletcher's "Checks," vol. i. p. 53, Conference Edition). They held, with Wesley, that "in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness (according to the Light that he had) is accepted with Him. (Ibid).

them, and closed in with their doctrine." It seems very probable that in this account, the second visit of Audland and Camm in September is alluded to, as well as the visit in July.* They were not at first believed to be persons "walking in a spirit of delusion, for they came in such a guise of outward holiness, they so transformed themselves, that as our Saviour foretold, 'if it were possible they would deceive the very Elect,' under a pretence of living in the Spirit, and abandoning forms respect of persons, as Matt. xxiv. 24, 26, saying, 'Christ is in the secret chamber,' that is, within only in the heart, the Light within, the finest thread the Papists could spin." Here follows, apparently, a refutation of some portion of their sermons, and this instructive account proceeds, "Thus, they coming as foretold, *they were not known*, but afterwards they were called by the name of 'Quakers,' from people's shaking and quaking that received them and their doctrine, and then they were fixed to *their* opinion after such a fit upon them (!) Thus this damnable doctrine, even denying the Lord that bought them, promoted by the Jesuits, and assisted by evil spirits from the devil, was founded!" The documental proof follows, which turned out to be entirely false, and the account proceeds : "For divers persons were seen in this city, when hearing (of) them, to be taken in such a concution of their bodies, that they would fall down upon the earth, and wallowing upon the ground, would foam at the mouth, like as we read in Mark ix. 20, and Luke ix. 39, by which their foaming it is evident it was not the Spirit of God, but the spirit of devils that helped the fomentors, Jesuits and Papists, in carrying on this work."

Here we learn the real origin of the nick-name of

* "Broadmead Records," p. 44.

"Quakers." In consequence of their successful adoption of field preaching to "profane people," a very powerful impression was produced, not on themselves but on their converts.*

The Calvinistic Baptist churches do not appear to have been very energetic in the work of the evangelization of the common people; they consisted of little companies of respectable godly people, gathered from the Presbyterian worship, into what they deemed a more scriptural form of church discipline, and gradually became convinced of the importance and scriptural sanction of immersion. The early preachers of the Society of Friends appealed to the number of persons they converted, as a proof of their being true Gospel ministers. One of them, having said that "he never came to a place but he was received, and converted some in it," is told by a Calvinistic Baptist, that under the preaching of *Christ* at Corazin and Bethsaida "they repented not!"* In the Westmoreland petition to Parliament, "the physical effects which follow their preaching," it was said, "did exceedingly savour of sorcery . . . swellings, quakings, roarings, foamings." "None of the Saints of old," they were told, "did ever *foam* in their tremblings," and "you deny no part of the charge, but blasphemy and sorcery."

* It will be found that this is quite consistent with the account given by Fox, and that it is questionable whether there is any reliable evidence of the early preachers shaking under the force of enthusiastic emotion, while there is much evidence of their preaching causing evil men to "tremble at the Word of the Lord." *

† "The Quakers Quaking: A Tract to the Baptist Churches, to warn them against Quaking Temptations," by Jeremiah Ives.

• "Gough's History," p. 96, vol. i. Page 85, or 1650 of Journal; also Sewel's History, pp. 82 and 83, or 1650.— "That there is *no evidence whatever* for the statement in Neal, describing Fox as having a 'fit of trembling.'" This has been admitted in Dr. Toulmin's Edition of Neal.

Fortunately these were merely temporary effects, there were other and permanent results of their preaching.* To use Fox's words, but "when people came to have experience of Friends' honesty and faithfulness, and found that their yea was yea, and their nay was nay, and that they kept to a word in their dealings,† and that they would not cozen and cheat them, but that if they sent a child to their shops for anything they were as well used as if they had come themselves, the lives and conversations of Friends did preach, and reached the witness of God, in the people. Then things altered so, that all the inquiry was, "where was a draper, or shopkeeper, or tailor, or shoemaker, or any other tradesman that was a Quaker ?" † There can be no doubt, that whether these poor people were able or not, to express in accurate theological terms the nature of the change which was wrought in them, their enemies being judges, it existed, and they were (they said) "turned from darkness to light;" "whereas I was blind now I see." This change, some of the bigoted religionists of the day found as difficult to account for, as the Pharisees did

* "But notwithstanding all that was acted against us and spoken, many hundreds of the honest and sober people owned us, and also many rude and ungodly persons were converted to the Truth. I say many hundreds, in two years time, were brought to the knowledge of the Lord, and to own us, all which time we laboured and travelled in patience, giving up ourselves to live or die, and to all manner of sufferings and reproaches, and had trials that we might fulfil faithfully what we were called unto; the Lord never forsook us, but His wisdom, love, life, and presence increased in us and with us ;" 1652 to 1654. "Edward Burrough's Autobiography," in his Works, 1672.

† It has been stated by Miss Whately, of Cairo, that we owe the system of *fixed prices*, which now obtains in England, as opposed to the system of *bargaining*, to George Fox. Without in any way invalidating this view, the author thinks it may be traced as one of the distinctive doctrines of the ancient Baptists, in the time of Luther. See MSS. in Lambeth Palace Library, "Codex Tennisonianus," 682. This has been the practice among the Mennonites from the earliest period.

‡ "Fox's Journal," 1653.

the miracle performed on the man who was born blind, described in John's Gospel.*

The number of the members of the Baptist Church in Broadmead, on "the ninth day of this Ninth Month, 1679, was forty-two brethren and one hundred and eight sisters, and six 'under discipline'—total one hundred and fifty six." † We have distinct evidence that there were at least seven hundred members belonging to the Society of Friends, in Bristol, in the year 1658.‡ We may gain some clue to the numbers of attenders at a later period, from the

* It is very noteworthy, that in the records of the Broadmead Church, although they are charged with "brutish deportment to magistrates," &c., there is not the slightest charge of the interruption of ministers and public worship. They have many grievous things laid to their charge; among others, the deposition of George Cowleshay, of the city of Bristol, ironmonger, to prove that they are Jesuits, and, as we have before seen, Baxter was carried away by "that Bedlam fancy," as Henry Denne called it, to believe that Quakerism was a deeply laid scheme of the Pope. He declares that "Franciscan friars and other Papists, and its like, are the very soul of all these horrible delusions." To the terror of the Broadmead Church, the Friends printed "*small paper books*," which "further showed that it was the design of Satan carried on by Papists also." Also we are told that "an evil spirit went along with doctrine, and had power over some, by their speakers *looking upon them!*" Dennis Hollister would hardly seem to have been a valuable acquisition to the new Society, and the character given him in the Broadmead records seems to have been fully justified. He published a most violent pamphlet,* in which he denies that he ever said "the Bible was the plague of England;" and that excellent christian man, Thomas Ewin, the pastor of the church in Broadmead, answers him, and shows a more excellent spirit. The sweeping character, however, of the new movement, stumbled him, and he asks,† "Are you not joined with all the Papists, Atheists, Ranters, and ungodly rabble of the world, in this one design of the devil to break in pieces the Church of Christ in England?"

† "Broadmead Records," p. 419.

‡ "Rabshakeh's Outrage Reproved; a Whip for William Grigg of Bristol;" London, 1658. Page 15, "Dost thou not know that there are many more than 700 of the people called Quakers in and about the city of Bristol?" He says "*not one*" of the 700 was concerned in Naylor's proceedings. See p. 425 of this work.

* "The Skirts of the Whore Discovered," p. 18.

† "The Church of Christ in Bristol Recovering her Vail," &c., 1651, by Thomas Ewin. Hollister replies to this, "The Harlot's Vail Removed," &c. He declares that he and his fellow members of the "little parliament," did not "eat the bread of the people," but "were willing to spend, and be spent, in the service of our country, according to the will of God, with our *Bibles in our hands*."

language used in a letter written on 24th November, 1660, by R. Ellsworth, addressed to Sir E. Nicholas. Speaking generally of Quakers, Anabaptists, and others, he says, "These, I had almost said, monsters of men, with us are, yea more numerous than in all the West of England; and here they all centre, and have their meetings at all seasons till nine o'clock at night, and later, sometimes about 1,000 or 1,200 at a time, to the great affrighting of this city."* It is obvious that all these congregations did not assemble at one time, and the whole evidence seems to point to a very large attendance at the meeting-houses of the Friends; indeed, there seems every evidence, from the records still preserved in that meeting, that not only was their "great" meeting-house crowded to the galleries,† but that occasionally the yard or alley outside was filled with eager listeners, and there appears to have been for some period the *public* meeting outside the meeting-house, and a "private," or "retired meeting" inside.‡

In a Minute, dated 12th July, 1678, these "retired meetings" seem to have been introduced as something new—"a trial of the conveniency and benefit thereof"—an experiment, which in a subsequent Minute, 10th Eleventh Month, 1678, they decided to continue, "upon consideration of the benefit to Friends in such meetings (we) do desire a long continuance thereof." The Minute runs thus: "It being proposed by Lawrence Steele, in

* Letter in Record Office.

† In 1671 the Baptist Church in Broadmead took "the meeting-house at the lower end of Broadmead, where the heretics called Quakers had formerly used to meet," a room 48 feet by 45 feet. This is believed to be the site of the present Welsh Chapel in Broadmead. This was first let to the Baptists, and was then occupied by Wesley, and passed from the Wesleyans to its present owners. There appears to be great difficulty in arriving at the area of the original meeting-house.

‡ See Minute, 10th Eleventh Month, 1678. Bristol M.M. Book.

the love of God, unto this meeting, that it might be beneficial to Friends to spend some time upon the First Days in pure retirement and silence before the Lord, in the withdrawing of as many as are free out of our public meeting in the afternoon into such an assembly.”* The inference is clear, that the public meeting in a town like Bristol was mainly occupied with preaching and vocal prayer, so much so, that they found relief in “sylence.” This, it appears, by an entry, 14th Seventh Month, 1676, was even then unsuited to “the ruder sort of people,” and complaint is made that they left immediately after the last prayer, instead of waiting for the meeting to conclude.

In the year 1700, the meeting received 300 copies of “Barclay’s Apology,” for which they paid to Tasse Sowle £33 1s. 6d. Taking into account that there had been previous editions of this book, the number is clearly very large.

The population of Bristol in the year 1685 was, according to Lord Macaulay’s estimate, 29,000†, and we see at once that the preaching of Fox and his adherents had a great and permanent effect in this, the second manufacturing and mercantile city in England.‡

The minute books of the meeting show at once that the adherents of the new Society were largely drawn from

* In “times of persecution,” it is however “to dissolve and not be,” lest it should “encourage Friends to withdraw from *public meetings*.”

† The grounds on which this estimate was arrived at was the number of houses, viz., 5,300, ascertained from the returns of the hearth money; then rating the proportion of inhabitants to houses as fifty-five inhabitants to ten houses (which was ascertained in London to be the correct rate), this gives 29,000 inhabitants. This is obviously a liberal estimate, because in London there would probably be found more inhabitants to each house.

‡ In Charles the Second’s time no provincial town in the kingdom contained 30,000 inhabitants, and only four provincial towns contained as many as 10,000. For this and the preceding information as to the population of Bristol, I am indebted to J. Leech, Esq., of Bristol.

the artizan class. Carpenters, bakers, tobacco-cutters, butchers, tailors, apothecaries, gallipot makers, grocers, wool-combers, soap-boilers, shoe-makers, wire-drawers, mariners, merchants, saddlers, blacksmiths, silk weavers, gunsmiths, tilers, are found to have been constantly marrying, while a minute dated 31st Sixth Month, 1699, censures "Friends' coaches" driving up to the meeting-house; they should "stay in the street, as some have been hurt." They were sorely troubled by the "rude boyes" in the gallery of the large meeting-house misbehaving themselves. For several years they made great efforts, by committees, sufficiently to restrain them, *e.g.*, from rushing boisterously down the stairs when the meeting was over, and even behaving irreverently in the time of public worship, and also playing outside.* Their behaviour at last (in 1697) even infected "the girls" by their bad example. The schoolmaster afterwards appears on the scene, and fewer complaints of bad behaviour are made. It would seem that attenders, as well as members, were married at the meeting-house.†

In 1693 the "morning meeting on First-days" begins to be over much thronged. The afternoon meeting evidently was the most thronged. The artizan class probably assembled (as is mostly the case now) at the later period in the day, and it was necessary to have both the "great meeting-house in Broadmead," and the smaller one in Temple Street, open for public worship. This large and important Church had several eminent ministers, of whom may be mentioned Charles Marshall, whose writings show him to have been a sound, well educated, eloquent, christian

* Their parents are to be "communicated with," and if in vain they "must not take it hard if they find their children in Bridewell." 21st Second Month, 1701.

† This was the case to a large extent also in Ireland.

man. Their christian liberality was appealed to from all parts of the kingdom. Their own poor constantly claimed their attention; they were, however, not above claiming for their poor such legal provision as was in existence.

On 26th Sixth Month, 1700, the case of Rebecca Russel is considered, and “R. Snead is desired to lay her case before the churchwardens and overseers of the poor at Bedminster, and in case she cannot get relief, that she make her case known to the justices at their next meeting at Hayland, for that she may depend upon the city for relief. But at present to supply her at times as far as tenpence shall (^{word} _{indistinct}) to be made good out of the public stock.”

On 9th Twelfth Month, 1682, the “sufferings and afflictions of the poor Friends in this City” were so great, that the Quarterly Meeting of York, to show “the great sense of compassion” they had, “sent a token of thirty pounds” to be distributed “to those who have the most need.” The meeting at Bristol “tenderly accepts their brotherly love towards us.” On the 26th September, 1696, the distress was so great, that the meeting agreed “to set the poor to work in the weaving trade.” £420 was collected at once as capital (which was, doubtless, assisted out of the public stock). A large, commodious factory building was built.* This “workhouse,” or factory, was maintained for a lengthened period by the early Society of Friends. They made capital woollen stuffs, &c., of which samples still remain, the colours of which are not particularly drab, and they were purchased by tradesmen all over England,

* NOTE.—Which has lately been turned into an admirable Mission Hall and School premises. Any person visiting it, will find on a Sunday evening 500 or 600 men and women attending the services there held, of precisely the same class of persons, viz., the artizans of Bristol, who formed the largest portion of the early church there. There are no fewer than 500 children taught on Sundays, besides the day schools; adult classes for men, lectures, and readings, being given during the week.

principally by members of the Society. In 1692 they established a book shop. The morality of the working-class of Friends seems to have been high. Occasionally they compelled the delinquent who had dishonored his profession, to sign a paper of condemnation. The ale-house appears to have been the greatest cause of stumbling, and once (7th Second Month, 1701) a case of flagrant immorality is mentioned, their grief respecting which is simply told ; "we remember not the like to have happened amongst us before." "The Holy Scriptures do positively say, that such shall not inherit the kingdom of God," &c. Great care is extended in apprenticing young people. The orphan is cared for, and details are entered into thus : "Charles Jones is desired to supply E. Pane's child with two shirts and one pair of breeches." But there is no narrow spirit in their sympathies. In First Month, 26th, 1688, "the necessity of some of the French Protestants now in this city lying before the consideration of this meeting. This meeting agreed that a collection shall be made publicly, in the public meeting, on the 8th of 2nd Month next." Four eminent and wealthy members are appointed "to attend the doors to receive what Friends are free to give. Charles Harford is desired to give notice of the collection to the meeting next First-day afternoon, to the end that Friends may come prepared to give." "And this collection at the doors (9th Second Month, 1688), with some small addition since brought in, amounts to the sum of £21 2s. 2d." This evidences both the size of the congregation and their Christian liberality; being a vast sum considering the difference of value, to be collected at the doors of a church. Then, on 6th Second Month, 1704, they gave no less than £78 19s. 4d. "for the suffering Protestants of the principality of Orange." It is an interesting fact,

that the excellent practice of making *public* collections in this manner, is still continued in this meeting for the Bible Society and other public objects, while it has been generally discontinued in the Society, showing the changes which have taken place from the time when the meetings appealed at the "public meeting" to the public generally, for the common objects of Christian charity.

In 1696, at the Yearly Meeting at Bristol, they say "not a jar, rent, or schism hath so much as appeared amongst us," and that the accounts they had from "the several counties which constitute this yearly assembly, concerning the affairs of truth, were very comfortable, for the work of the Lord goes on, and the house of David grows stronger and stronger." Up to 1719, the accounts given in the minutes of this Yearly Meeting show that "the doctrine of the Gospel has been plentifully preached, both to the edification of his flock and family, as well as the information of strangers" (1718). The object of those who, in 1719, were wishing that "the circular-yearly-meeting system should be carried out vigorously and have greater extension," was "the propagation of the Gospel and the doctrine of Truth among those who are strangers to it." In Somersetshire there were thirty-seven meetings of Friends on 31st May, 1668. In the records of this meeting there are preserved two books of the "attendance of ministers," (dating from 1728-9 to 1770, which are, doubtless, the only two remaining, as there is no entry at the commencement of the books as is usual when an entirely new book is commenced). The ministers were accustomed to meet every Monday, and arrange for the attendance of two ministers at the two meetings, Temple Street and Fryars in Bristol, and for Keynsham, Frenchay, and many other meetings in the district round the city. The "circular

"Yearly Meetings" were held at Gloucester, and as far north as Kidderminster, and as far south as Exeter. The annals of the Church in Bristol, are a proof of the solid and enduring results of the itinerant lay preaching, developed by Fox as the founder of a Christian Society.

CHAPTER XIV.

RICHARD BAXTER MEETS THE ITINERANT PREACHERS. HIS DISLIKE OF LAY PREACHING. QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO THE NEW MINISTRY BY BAPTISTS AND FRIENDS. THE PREACHERS UNDER THE CONTROL OF FOX. CARE TAKEN IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN PREACHERS. EVANGELISTIC WORK IN LONDON.

THE preachers in connection with Fox, early encountered Richard Baxter, and received his unsparing and bitter opposition. It would be difficult to select a man of equal celebrity, whose character shows a greater lack of capacity to understand the public men and the real bearing of the measures of his day. His credulity was very great. Whilst pleading for peace and moderation, his intolerance of those who assailed the Presbyterian party carried him to extremes, which in a later period of his life he deplored. It was not wonderful that he should be regarded by the new Society, as one of the principal upholders of the worldly power of a new spiritual tyranny, which every Christian was bound to oppose, even to prison and to death. Baxter, on the other hand, acutely seeing their organized plans of proceeding, considered them as “new-headed with some “secret dissembling friars, and by them and by the devil, “enraged against the ministers of Christ,” (*i.e.*, the

Presbyterians), "and set upon the propagating of the substance of Popery."*

Thomas Goodair and James Naylor paid several visits to Kidderminster, and preached in the town, and appear to have established a meeting there. There can be little doubt that they spread some of their tracts or papers in the town, and that Baxter, as a vigilant pastor, encountered them with one of these in his hand, and bluntly demanded "What all these heavy accusations meant?" "Greedy dumb dogs," "Child of the devil," "Son of perdition," &c. Naylor probably replied, exactly as he did in print, that they were "Scriptural expressions," and used in Scripture to apply to a certain class of persons who deserved them. Baxter does not say that they called *him*, personally, these hard names, but that they said he was called "master" and "stood on the high place to preach;" "studied" his sermons, "preached by an hour-glass, and would limit the Spirit (if he had it)," and took "tithes." Thomas Goodair charged him, he says, to be "empty of the Spirit" because he *studied*, "and he (*i.e.*, T. G.) told me *he* did not study, no, *not in speaking*, what to say! *I the less marvel at his nonsense*, but I pray God forgive me that *I* study no more. Do you think we cannot talk without study, as well as you? I can bring you a woman fit for the grumble-stool" (the ducking-stool in which "scolds" were inhumanly ducked) "that shall, without study, talk it out with the best of you!" "Does the Spirit *exclude reason and prudence, and set a man's tongue going so that he cannot stop it?*" "If *all* have the light," said Baxter, "why may not *I* have it?"

They asked Baxter who gave him "a commission to

* Preface to Quaker's Catechism.

preach," but he was far too skilful a disputant to be caught with the question which had entangled many an unfortunate Presbyterian parson. So he answered by offering, he says "your prater" to show him "*my commission from Heaven*, if he would show me *HIS!*" He told me "it was *invisible*." And "Why," retorted Baxter, "may you not *take* the answer that you *give?*" Naylor replied to this, that it was "invisible to the *world*," and such as Baxter. Baxter appears to have ended the conversation, by offering to come into their congregation and answer them. For some reasons they did not accept this, but Goodair immediately after came into Baxter's church. Baxter was ill, but his assistant, on being questioned by Goodair, after the service was concluded, "fled," called an officer, and Goodair was sent to prison. Goodair says, that "no such thing as an affront was offered either by uncivil words or gestures," and to call him a "disturber of the peace is but a cover and shuffle, as there was no law transgressed." Naylor says that the reason they did not accept Baxter's challenge to dispute in the Quakers' assemblies, was because Goodair was "twice imprisoned by Baxter's sending." This Baxter denies. They again met at Worcester, but they appear, as Baxter commenced a paper warfare, to have preferred continuing it. With the most practised logician in England they were clearly over-matched. Later on Penn encountered him, and possibly Baxter found that there was more to dispute upon in Quakerism than he had imagined, since only night separated the combatants, each party claiming the victory. "Your prater," says Baxter, "feared not before God to affirm, that if I had no pay I would not preach, and I do here profess before the same God, that he is a liar, and I *prove* it because I have long preached without pay." To this Naylor provokingly

challenges him to "come out and preach without pay, and then he will agree with him that the prater is a liar."*

Baxter said that the Quakers "empty the churches of the Anabaptists and the Separatists—the young, unsettled—and those who have '*no religiousness*,'" and "therefore I would do all that I can to hinder such an emptying of their churches as tendeth to the *more* certain filling of Hell!"

Naylor replies to him, "Some of your (*i.e.*, the Presbyterian) churches are so emptied," and says, that "those whom the Anabaptists and Separatists *turn out*, your priests receive as *rare converts* . . . as long as they have *pig or goose!*"

Baxter had a violent antipathy to lay preaching. Not only did he attack the preachers of the new Society as incompetent, but in his "Cure of Church Divisions," 1670, objects to the Independents' and Baptists' preaching as "a pitiful, raw and ignorant, affectionate manner of expression, and loudness of preacher's voice."

In a tract, written on the part of the Separatists, "An antidote against Mr. Baxter's palliated cure of Church Divisions," &c., the writer severely criticises Mr. Baxter's views, especially in speaking reproachfully against "the preaching which God doth ordinarily own as his "instrument in working conversions by," and claims for the preachers of "a Gospel separation," an "affectionate and zealous earnestness," as well as "depth of learning."

* Baxter, in his autobiography, explains what was the state of the case. A private arrangement was made between himself and the magistrates and burgesses. The old incumbent was set aside; Baxter was to have £100 and a house, while he only actually got a clear £80 or £90, and a few rooms at the top of another man's house, and out of this he undertook to provide £40 for a preacher for Mitton, a chapel in the parish, and therefore doubtless he received nothing but his subsistence.* Probably, however, Baxter also spoke of his chaplainship in the army.

* "Baxter's Autobiography," p. 79.

Baxter complains that the Quakers followed him home, crying out in the streets, “The day of the Lord is coming, and thou shalt perish as a deceiver!” They cried under his windows, year after year, “Take heed of your priests!” When he went along London streets “the Quakers in their shops say, ‘Alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness!’” In the “Quakers’ Catechism,” a work which Baxter wrote in hot haste (it took him “a day or two” to write), he addresses them as “miserable creatures,” and classes with them the “Separatists and Anabaptists of England.”*

It was not possible after this treatment, that they should be prepared to see the excellencies of his Christian character, especially as he was the leading spirit in petitioning the Parliament on behalf of the Presbyterian ministers’ State maintenance. This was attacked in a pamphlet by Thomas Aldam and others, entitled the “Threefold state of Antichrist, Pope, the Bishops, and the Presbyters.”

Baxter had in late years to admit the good service done to the cause of liberty of conscience by the despised Quakers. Towards the end of his life we see how nearly he approached Fox in the spirituality of his views, in the following sentence: “I am now,” he says, “much more

* In “Gildas Salvianus, the Reformed Pastor”—published in 1657—one of Baxter’s most valuable works, he goes out of his way to call Richard Farnsworth (a man of the highest character) “A wretch.” In “The Ministers’ Agreement for Catechising,” they confessed that they had “neglected the work of the Lord,” and Farnsworth had availed himself of the confession to prove them “no ministers of Christ,” &c. Farnsworth held that the exclamation, in the Seventh Chapter of Romans, of the Apostle Paul, “Oh, wretched man that I am,” &c., applied to him in his *unconverted or partially awakened state*; and the Eighth Chapter of Romans described the condition of the Christian. Baxter says the reverse—he calls the Quakers “impudent revilers,” and, while using language of this kind, complains bitterly of his antagonist! Compare Archbishop Whately’s remarks on the Seventh of Romans, in “Cautions for the Times,” pp. 469 to 471.

apprehensive than heretofore, of the necessity of well grounding men in their religion, and especially of the witness of the indwelling Spirit. For I more sensibly perceive that the Spirit is the greatest witness of Christ and Christianity to the world, and, though the folly of fanatics tempted me to overlook the strength of this testimony of the Spirit, yet *now I see* that the Holy Ghost in another manner, is the witness of Christ, and His Agent in the world. The Spirit in the prophets was his first witness, and the Spirit by miracles was the second, and the Spirit by renovation, sanctification, illumination, and consolation, assimilating the soul to Christ and Heaven, is the continued witness to all true believers, and ‘if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His.’’’*

There can hardly be a doubt that the views of the despised Separatists, Anabaptists, Independents, and Quakers, respecting the importance of the separation of Church and State, will be amply vindicated; and it will be tardily admitted, that George Fox saw this and some other matters, in a far clearer light than the learned and pious Baxter.

We have already shown that the new Presbyterian ministers were far from popular. They were generally regarded as perfectly *illegal* ministers, and were therefore challenged to show from Scripture their right to their position, and to the impost of tithes, and it was not altogether unacceptable to their parishioners to see them placed in this somewhat uncomfortable position. This accounts for the way in which they submit to answer questions which, had there been no change from Episcopacy to Presbyterianism, there would have been no ground for asking,

* Autobiography, pp. 127, 128, folio edition, part i.

and to which a regular clergyman would have simply declined to answer.

This system of questioning the State-supported Ministry was commenced by the Baptists.* In 1649, we find a Kentish Baptist addressing a series of questions to John Couch, Master of Arts and Minister of God's Word, which we annex below.† In 1652, we find Varvasor Powell doing the same. The following may be taken as a fair example of the sort of questions addressed to the new Presbyterian ministry. William Emerson could hardly be one of the New Society—"the Children of the Light"—although he is spoken of as a "Quaker," if he wrote in 1648, since the first publication of George Fox was in 1652.‡

* "The Quakers' practice in opposing and questioning the ministers in their congregations—declare themselves disciples of the Anabaptists"—"The Quakers' Jesus," by W. Grigg, London, 1658.

† "Anabaptistorum Scrupuli: or, An Answer of a Kentish Anabaptist, made in the Year 1649," by John Couch, Master of Arts and Minister of God's Word. London, 1650. B.M.

The Anabaptist Queries:—

1. Whether the multitude be the Church? or, whether the gospel churches be not a company of people who are visible saints in outward profession.
2. Whether you are a Minister of Jesus Christ at all? and whether you have a right call to be our minister? and whether, to your knowledge, did you ever call home any soul to God?
3. Whether infant baptism be an ordinance of Christ, or an abomination of anti-christ? or, whether believers in profession are not of right the subject of Baptism?
4. Whether it be a greater sin to omit the Lord's Supper, or to come unprepared to it?
7. Whether was it the love of Christ, or the love of our tythes, that moved you to preach to us?
9. Whether you ever find the world and the Church in Scripture, ever make a visible body in worship as your parish do *in singing together*? and whether so singing be not an abomination?

‡ "Answer to a Quaker's Seventeen Heads of Queries, containing in them Seventy-seven Questions," by John Bewick, Minister of the Gospel, and Rector of the Parish Church of Stanhope, in Weredale, in the county of Durham; London, was published in 1660, probably a *second edition*. This John Bewick wrote a work in 1642, on lay preaching. "William Emerson's Questions to John Bewick"—without date,

We find he addressed the following question to John Bewick, called minister of Stanhope. The minister of Stanhope is thus temperately addressed :—“ Friend, who calls thyself a minister of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures to be the rule, show me out of the Scriptures when the Apostles, or the Disciples, or the Ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ, or any of the Saints or Believers ran up and down, or sent up and down, and wrangled with parishes for tithe calves, tithe pigs, geese, or eggs, apples, hey, wool, lambs, flax, fowls, plow pennies, bees, garden, or for money for smoak passing up chimnies.* Answer me this by Scriptures out of the Apostles’ or Disciples’ practice, and give me plain Scripture for it, or else I shall never believe that thou art a minister of Christ, but hath the tithes from the author the Pope, come up since the days of the Apostles. Would’st thou rule among the people if they should take away thy means ?—divine, if they should take away thy money ?—keep the flock, if they should take away the fleece ?”

John Bewick, minister of Stanhope, stands manfully to his colours, and quotes Leviticus, &c.; he asserts that to murmur against the “ministers’ maintenance is doubtless a murmuring against God, because He did not *make us to be creatures to live without food and raiment,*” and then gives a home thrust in reply to the question by Emerson : “ Dost thou own the prophesying sons and daughters of this age ?”

and apparently a very early publication—are in Devonshire House Library. If we suppose him to have been a “Friend,” Bewick’s preface will show that the nickname of Quaker was given as early as “12th January, 1648,” if that date is not a misprint. The expressions in the work seem clearly to show that it is of earlier date than 1660.

* This was the Peter’s pence, which had been continued to the clergy by Elizabeth.—“Arraignment of Popery,” by G. Fox, p. 106 :—“Quaker: ‘What, had the Pope a penny for every chimney in England that smoked?’ Papist: ‘Yes.’

Bewick: "I disown all preaching daughters of men which are in this age,—both the Jesuitesses among the Papists, and the prophetesses late sprung up among deluded Protestants,—yet they may be said to prophesy according to such signification of the word prophesy, which allows to any professor (though he be no preacher) of the Gospel.* It will be noticed that the first female preacher among Fox's adherents began to preach in 1650, † and she was one of his first converts; we have here therefore women's preaching again alluded to as not uncommon, two years before that date.

Sometimes they invited the Presbyterian minister to discussion, and "made him confess that he was a minister made by the State and maintained by the State;" ‡ and sometimes the encounter took place after the weekly lecture was over in the church. On one occasion, after an address from Thomas Briggs, one of the preachers in connection with Fox, the priest defended himself, and was "very subtle;" but "with the Light" was "seen" and "judged." And so they asked the priest Harrison, "Who sent him?" He said "Christ." "If," said they, "he was a minister of Christ, and cleansed by His blood," they bid him "name one of the congregation whom he had *turned from the evil of his ways.*" So the unfortunate "priest" called out one of his converts as a sample of the fruits of his labours. This was pretty severe, but they then cross-examined the convert, and they asked him "If he was redeemed?" And the man replied that "he was subject to sin as long as he was in the

* "Bewick's Reply to Emerson's Questions," &c.,—King's Pamphlets, British Museum, pp. 1—7. This shows that the exercise of lay "prophesying" was not entirely disowned by the Presbyterians. See p. 156; note, as to women's prophesying among the Presbyterians.

† Sewel, p. 46. ‡ "Fox's Journal,"—Cornwall, p. 161, 3rd folio edition.

flesh."* This specimen of the fruits of the priest's teaching was rejected, because he was not "turned from the evil of his ways." The object of Christ's coming was not to save His people *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. Christ "gave himself for us, to redeem us from *all iniquity*."[†] "Ministers of Christ" are for "the perfecting of the saints," &c., &c. There appears in this instance to have been some special force in the convert's saying he was "subject to sin," for "the priest was so confounded that he went away, and but *one* of his hearers with him." We have before remarked that the doctrine of "perfection," as taught by Fox and his preachers, will be found on careful examination to have been substantially the same as that taught by Wesley and Fletcher; and it subjected the "Friends" to similar persecution from extreme Calvinists, but to an extent far exceeding anything which can now be readily imagined.[‡]

Sometimes these questionings were put in the form of a printed poster, or broadside. The following extracts are from some of G. Fox's. § "Friend, who art called a Teacher of this people of the way of God, how many hast thou brought into it?" "Or art thou thyself in it?" "How many hast thou brought out of evil ways?" "Or art thou thyself out of evil ways?" "Wilt thou preach

* "Swarthmore Papers,"—390.

[†] "Fox's Journal," 3rd folio edition, p. 30. Then did the priests bestir themselves to preach up sin for term of life.—See also pp. 471, 472 &c. Worcester, 1674. Fox sets forth his views very clearly here.

[‡] On one occasion they were asserted to "boast of perfection," and the reply was: "We *own* perfection, but we do *not* boast of it!" It was "a going on unto perfection," and a perfection in "their measure" which was attainable. "Would Christ and His Apostles constantly urge this going on unto perfection, if a state answering to their intentions was unattainable?"

§ York Minster Library—Fly sheets, No. 45. "A few plain words, by way of querie and information, to the teachers and people of this nation."—By George Fox, 1660.

peace to them that curse and swear, that are drunkards, such as are adulterers, idolators, envious, strikers, covetous, mockers ; such as follow pleasures and live wantonly on the earth, and liars, cozeners, and cheaters, while they put into thy mouth ? ” “ Do they ill who be in Ezekiel’s spirit now ?—that cry against such as make a prey of the sheep for the fleece in the cloudy and dark day ? ” “ Have ye the same spirit and power the prophets and apostles had, who call yourselves teachers ?—If not, how can ye sow spiritual things ? ” “ Have these had the same spirit and power the apostles had, that have had their gaols, houses of correction, inquisitions, to hold up their church, worship, religion, ministry and maintenance, seeing the apostles said, ‘ their weapons were not carnal but spiritual ? ’ ” “ Did they plunder and rifle the houses of people for not mending their temple, and paying the clark that turns the glass (hour-glass), and says ‘ Amen,’ and lays the cushion and hangs the priest’s pulpit ? ” “ Was the Scripture given forth for men to make a trade of them ; or for men to read them and believe in them, and come unto the thing they speak of ? ”

Again, in 1655, to the Presbyterian ministry :—“ If ye claim tythes by the law of man, are ye not State ministers, and no ministers of Christ ? ” “ Are ye not, therefore, State ministers, having your allowance by the law of man, and not from the allowance of Christ, who said, ‘ Freely ye have received, freely give ’—preach the Gospel, live of the Gospel.” “ Are these State ministers—yea, or nay ? ”

Then with regard to the sale of livings, he is bitterly sarcastic upon the Puritan divines who had not long ago cried down such doings :—“ Are they not in ‘ the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity,’ that think the gift of God can be purchased for money ?—and doth not the

Apostle tell your friend Simon that the gift of God is not to be bought or sold for money? Tell your friend Simon so!"*

In 1653 Fox appears to have demanded of the ministers an answer, "*in writing*," to his queries, under the stern threat that he would post them "upon the cross, or in the market or steeple-house, so truth will not be baffled with deceit!" The lines do not appear to have fallen to the new ministers in very pleasant places, when Fox and his friends appeared on the scene. Those who were Christian men generally replied mildly to their questions, and we cannot but see that some of the queries were calculated to have a salutary effect upon men who were crowding far too eagerly to enjoy the good things which were offered them by the benefices of England; who had had tender consciences, and scrupled many things in the days when the Puritan party was a persecuted minority, but were now showing how far their profession of the strictest and most biblical Christianity could bear the strain of prosperity.

In the minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of Cornwall, in 1668, "A list of all *turncoat* and *weathercock* priests in the county," who changed their Puritan or Presbyterian principles for Episcopacy, was ordered to be kept.

We shall now endeavour to redeem our promise to our readers,† and show that those persons who conceive that the preachers who founded the Society of Friends, wandered over Great Britain, and travelled elsewhere, impelled by a vague and restless impulse of the Spirit; without any human guidance, organization, or distinct aim, are greatly mistaken. Instead of this, we shall find that preachers

* G. F.'s "Queries to Priests," 1655.—Swarthmore Papers.

† See pp. 265, 268, and 269.

were supplied for congregations; that they were displaced or "called in"—were sent to particular places where their gifts were specially likely to be useful. We find all the features of a well-organized system of itinerant lay preaching, something similar to that of the Wesleyans at the present day.) Those who were acquainted with the Society of Friends twenty years ago, will be struck with the difference between the picture presented to us by the original letters of the men who founded the Society of Friends and that which they recollect as then existing. The things which were done by the founders of the Society of Friends, in active home missionary effort, would at that period have been condemned by the modern Society as contrary to the primitive and fundamental principles of the Early Friends.

Among the travelling preachers, as we have seen, Fox occupied a position of vast influence. At one period, above seventy-three ministers were travelling, over whom he exercised control.* An account of their proceedings is given to the head quarters at Swarthmore Hall.† Fox is

* Letter 303, G. Taylor to Margaret Fell, 7th month, 1658.

† In 1658 they disputed with the "Manifestarians."* But the "Manifestarians manifested their folly," and were soon "set fast and could not tell how to answer." They pleaded that it was *dinner time*, much to the dissatisfaction of the two ministers. After dinner, the Manifestarians got into the steeple-house, and "acting priest-like," sent to Naylor and Farnsworth to come to them.

At Drypole, near Hull, in 1654, a public meeting appears to have been held, open to all denominations. The people, it is remarked, were "very attentive until *our time* was nearly spent." "Then stood up a light vain spirit in one of the Baptists, a teacher of theirs, and began an oration," but at last "his own company cried against him."

In 1654, we find Naylor engaged in disputing with a sort of Baptists, "who denied that faith was the gift of God." They called upon Naylor to prove his faith by a

* The Manifestarians were the followers of Thomas Moore, who preached in Lincolnshire, some parts of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. They held "peace principles," and appear to have had some curious opinions. They are catalogued by the indefatigable Edwards in his list of Errors, &c., in the 8th part of the *Gangrene* (Error No. 18). "Some of the Manifestarians hold that they have seen Christ visibly, and seen the Devil also."

consulted in matters of importance. They apply to him for liberty to return, and for some other preacher to be sent in their place to fulfil arrangements for meetings already made. Thus Thos. Goodyear writes to G. Fox, in 1653 : “I desire thee (if thou in thy wisdom find it meet so to do) to send up some Friend who is in the life and power of Truth, about two weeks hence, up to Swannington, then the day after the day called Christmas day, that I may have the liberty of returning, if but for a time ; to thy discretion I leave it.”

In 1653, Thos. Holmes wrote to Margaret Fell :—“ George hath *sent for me* to pass among Friends where he hath been in Leicestershire and Warwickshire.” Again, in 1653, Thomas Killam and Thomas Goodair write to George Fox :—“ Tender and careful Brother,—According to the charge *thou laid upon me*, I have been at Coventry upon a lecture day, and I went to the steeple-house and was moved to speak to the priests, &c., &c.”

T. Curtis to G. Fox, 8th Eleventh Month, 1658.—“ According to *thy desire* I was at Kemble, when a very great and precious meeting I had. Fish of all sorts, besides Friends. Many of the world. Some baptized, and some of Crab’s company.” Some Baptists asked questions, and they were “ satisfied in all but their water-baptism.”

Oliver Atherton writes to Margaret Fell, 17th Tenth Month, 1660 :—“ I received a letter from James Harrison, upon the 8th day of the Ninth Month, wherein he gave me

miracle, and it is worth noticing that Naylor objected to such a demand, and cautioned the people to “ take heed how they followed such as durst not try their faith with the Scriptures.”

In 1659, we find at a general meeting, appointed by Alex. Parker, probably at Sherrington, “ many of Bunyan’s people attended,” and that “ only one woman of Bunyan’s society opposed.” This shows that women were allowed the right of speaking, and even disputing, at their meetings.

to understand that G. Fox hath laid it upon him, John Shield, and myself, to go into Staffordshire and to get meetings up and down in that county and in the town of Stafford, in order to which I freely gave up. Richard Moore was also "moved to go with him." They held meetings as follows :—

18th Ninth Month, Manchester, 1 meeting in the evening.					
Sunday, 19th	"	"	1	"	morning.
" 19th	"	"	1	"	evening.
20th & 21st	"	Stockport,	2	"	
22nd	"	Congleton,	1	"	
23rd	"	Butterton,	1	"	[Here they met two other travelling preachers.]
24th	"	At the Ford,	1	"	
25th	"	Grim.			
26th	"	Bramshull,	1	"	

And they held meetings in the neighbourhood daily for two weeks, at Leek. At Bashford the Ranters and Baptists came, and R. Moore "declared" at the market-cross, and had much service in the neighbourhood. At Eccleshall they found "a wild people." At Edgmount they held three meetings, and here John Shield joined them. At Shrewsbury the meeting was interrupted by the soldiers, &c. The journey ended by O. Atherton the writer, and twenty-one others being committed to the common jail at Shrewsbury.

In 1656 there are frequent statements that such and such preachers are to be at certain places named, on such and such days, which implies order and arrangement.

On the 16th Fifth Month, 1656, we find a very interesting entry:—"Walter Clement writes to Margaret Fell:—Next day we came to Shrewsbury, where we found some soldiers (that were quartered there) newly convinced, some of whom were very tender, and we were informed that the townspeople begin to come in much to meetings. *They desire a Friend in the Ministry.* The soldiers are wise." In later times such was the influence of quietism of the

Lady Guion stamp, that this desire for a minister would have been strongly condemned. There is a desire evinced in these letters, that the little churches founded by the preacher, should not be left entirely "to wait," and that not only they should be visited by the travelling preachers, but that some minister should be sent to "stay a while" with them,* and act as elder till the church was regularly constituted. "J. Naylor to Margaret Fell, 1653: "The work is great and many desires begot, and people flock in apace, praises to our God for ever. We came to Cleveland people would meet in every place, had they but any to watch over them. . . . I should be glad to see Francis Howgill, or John Audland here; or Thomas Goodair if George was free to send for him he might be serviceable to meet with them, and would keep them together till they were established."

In 1654 James Naylor writes to G. Fox, "At Kingston and Theobalds are constant meetings set up, and some sent to them every First-day." There is frequent mention of visits to Baptist meetings, and the attendance of Baptists at their meetings, where the Baptists had equal liberty after the preacher had done to preach.

1658. Thomas Curtis, of Reading, writes to G. Fox, describing a meeting at Dunstable:—"A multitude was soon come together of Baptists and the world; a precious meeting we had, when we published truth to them clearly. Then one of their preachers stood up and preached his old garment of Water, and after he had done we preached Light and Truth again. Not once one interrupted the other, so that we found our service exceeding serviceable unto all.

* Priscilla Coton to M. Fell, 20th Ninth Month, 1660, sees a necessity for "T. Salt-house abiding in these parts some time, for there is need both in Cornwall and Devonshire—some baptize."

So we left (it) to that of God in all consciences to judge." There was an amount of tolerant wisdom in this, which might be often followed in its spirit with advantage. He visited them again in a fortnight as there was a "mighty, hungering." The Baptists who met with them sadly stumbled Thomas Curtis and his friends, as "every man had his tobacco pipe in his mouth, and made such a smoke in the room that it stank exceedingly." The Baptists smoked on through the sermons.

In 1658 John Sands writes to G. Fox, that "Uxbridge meeting had declined since Edward Burrough, who founded it, had gone elsewhere," and he asks G. Fox "to send a minister." In 1658, Thomas Ollive writes to G. Fox: "I heard by a Friend this day three weeks, at a meeting, as *laid down by thee*," (here we have evidence of a plan) "that there was a service for me at London if I was free. Since I heard it I have not seen anything against it, as in myself, and so this day I was moved to write to thee." In 1656 Arthur Cotten writes to Fox, that to "these two counties, Cornwall and Devon, there may be some sent which power and wisdom guides, and rather *men* Friends, for they *do not care to have any women*."

There was a strong general objection to women preachers, and the ministers strongly caution Fox against employing them too freely. William Caton writes to Margaret Fell, 1656: "I spoke to G. Fox concerning the women, or rather sisters, that hath been fellow helpers in the Gospel. He said little to it, but that some of them might cease. Yet he said they would be *glad of women or any* in these parts." Particulars are then given of who are to go to certain parts.

Edward Burrough writes to Fox very strongly,* urging

* Letter in Portfolio, Devonshire House Library, no date.

that more care should be taken in the selection of suitable persons for preachers—a difficulty which will always occur in any extensive scheme of lay-preaching, and which was experienced by Wesley. “I lie it upon thee, that none go forth but when the life (of Christianity) is manifested, and wisdom is grown to discern and order. For some hath been here, and we hear of some in our passage in Lancashire, which gives great occasion, and makes the truth evil spoken of, and we have the worse passage.” Some had given occasion of stumbling, and he adds, “*Call them in* when they come out of prison.” It will be seen from this letter, that great care was taken and a strict control exercised over the preachers, and that this control was exercised by Fox. Edward Burrough, in 1656,* disapproves of one of the women preachers, so he sends her to Fox, with this pithy note: “This little short maid that comes to thee, she has been this long while abroad, and in her there is little or no service as in the ministry. It were well to be laid on her to be a servant somewhere. That is more her place. I leave it to thee. Friends where she has been have been burdened by her.” Surely here is evidence of the existence of enthusiasm, and yet of sound good sense being used to govern it. They evidently did not allow the women ministers to “usurp authority” over the men. William Dewsbury, a noted minister, severely rebukes Elizabeth Coates, and orders her “to return to *her place in the outward* (*i.e.*, her home) and wait.” “Take heed of forwardness lest thou *lavish in words* what thou seest in vision!” W. Dewsbury writes to M. Fell, 23rd of Seventh Month, 1658, from Leith, to send a man and horse for Sara Knowles, for her to return. “The truth is under

* Letter in Portfolio, Devonshire House.

suffering until she be in her family again!" Proper care was evidently taken to call in all unsatisfactory preachers.*

So late as in 1706, we find that they erected a stand, or place for ministering women Friends to preach from, in the time of their ministry at Devonshire House. Prior to this, no place was provided for them. Also in Peel Meeting we find, in 1706, they first had any place to stand upon.

Burrough and Howgill write to Fox for more help in London. "Let Alex. (*i.e.*, Alexander Parker) come to help us, lest our net break." The people in those days were evidently capable of bearing a good deal of preaching. Howgill writes from Durham, to Burrough in London, "We had a fine meeting, &c. I spoke three hours"! In 1653 Naylor writes to Fox that Audland might come, as there are many meetings not established. Another letter, written in 1687, gives a glimpse of the machinery by which, at a later period, a supply of preachers was provided. R. Sandilands to John Field, at the "Bull and Mouth:" "It would be serviceable, and some Friends of wisdom desired me to acquaint you with it, if your Second-day's meeting (of which we shall shortly speak) took it into consideration, that there might be a constant supply by one Friend or another at Windsor, especially *during the time of the Court being there.*" Everywhere there is proof of an organized adaptation of means to ends, and of sterling good sense in religious matters, which would soon place the existing Society in a different position. But it has been for a century or more considered entirely contrary to the principles of the Society of Friends, to act as Fox and his coadjutors acted.

* Caton, when in Scotland, reports to Swarthmore, that there have been "unwise builders" among the Scotch churches, "which will tend to the ruin and destruction of the whole building."

Not only by their preaching, but by their tracts, did the founders of the Society disseminate their views of the nature of spiritual Christianity. R. Farnsworth sends to M. Fell at Swarthmore, and remarks that "Friends" read them "in the steeple-house porches" after the service was done, and in the markets, or at the Cross on market-days, and some soldiers were "made to go along with them, and stand by them while they are reading"—another curious instance of the sympathy between the army and Friends.

In 1659 there is a letter from Francis Gawler, of Cardiff, to G. Fox, respecting his brother, John Gawler, who is a justice of the peace, who had received a commission from Fleetwood to be a lieutenant-colonel, and asking G. F.'s advice whether he should accept it. Also Matthew Gibson had partly engaged to be a captain, and another a private soldier, "who we are tender of, knowing he hath no bad end in it, but thinks he may be serviceable for truth in it." George Fox's handwriting is endorsed upon it as—"bad; I replied that it was contrary to our principles, for our weapons are spiritall and not carnall."

The Travelling Preachers appear to have been all supplied with Bibles. Accounts of matters purchased *en route* for the use of the preachers, male and female, are sent to Swarthmore Hall. Articles of clothing are very frequent. Elizabeth Cowertt is furnished, for the going into the south, with a waistcoat and petticoat of an expensive character, costing no less than 19s. 2d. John Slee, a Bible, 7s. 6d. The Bibles furnished the preachers, cost 3s. 6d.—*e.g.*, W. Simpson, &c., a Bible, 3s. 6d.

In 1657, John Stubs, in writing to Margaret Fell, says he would write oftener, only "the charge by post hath, and doth sometimes stay me. I would not make the pure

truth unnecessarily chargeable"—showing the existence of a common fund from which these charges were defrayed.

In 1658, it appears that the expenditure was so large on the home evangelization fund, that at the "General Meeting at Scalehouse, the collection for the ministry, so far at least as concerned Friends' ministry in this nation," met with "general opposition." More information was called for, and George Taylor, one of the cashiers at Kendal, was not quite ready to satisfy Friends about the expenditure. Later, J. Miller writes to Margaret Fell, that some who opposed the collection are now better satisfied. Large sums were also collected, apparently without difficulty, for the foreign missions in America, Jamaica, &c.

Two of the most able ministers in the Society, Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough, commenced preaching in London in 1654. Both were men of good education, strong sense, undaunted courage, and of the rough and ready eloquence which captivates the masses. Their ministry was also characterized by stirring appeals to the conscience, which seems to have been a feature of the ministry of the Early Friends.* Burrough's peculiar gift was to "thunder against sin and iniquity."

The work was pushed on with vast energy, the well-trained men who had taken it in hand were fully able to deal with the "rude and savage apprentices," "threshing and plowing," as they term it, "Bible in hand among the scornful world." Whether it is needful to dispute with "the chief of the Baptists" and "the chief of the Water Baptists,"†

* See "Sewel," vol. I., 1654. Also for anecdote of Burroughs' preaching in the Wrestling Ring, p. 32, "London Meetings," by Beck and Ball—London, 1869.

† These were probably the Calvinistic Baptists. This is a curious term, and one which it is not easy to explain, except on the supposition that they were the special supporters of *immersion*.

"a new, wise, and subtle generation," as they style them, or with "Seekers," "Waiters," and "Ranters," Howgill and Burrough appear to have been equal to the emergency. They then held in London seven or eight meetings every Sunday, besides one in the Strand, Hackney, Pall Mall, and Palace Yard, Westminster. Howgill writes to M. Fell in January, 1656: "We have about twenty meetings a week." Their largest meeting house contained upwards of 1,000 people.* Howgill and Burrough preached incessantly, for three years, in London. Fox, Camm, Audland, Hubberthorne, and Alexander Parker, who was a well-educated man with "a gentleman-like carriage and deportment, as well as person," also the "greatly erring, but afterwards penitent," Naylor, followed them and supplemented their labours. Naylor's ministry was greatly run after, and "many from the Court went to hear him;" Sir Harry Vane, various titled Ladies, and Officers of the Army,—and it was doubtless the excitement of the work, and his popularity as a preacher in London, which turned the poor man's head and resulted in temporary insanity. Fox faithfully cautioned him at this period, and his fall furnished an opportunity for misrepresentation, which was availed of to the full, and the storm of persecution raged relentlessly.†

In 1655, the band of 73, or more preachers, in connection with Fox in the country places, were mostly in prison; ‡

* "Bull and Mouth;" this was used till the Great Fire of London. See William Crouch's "Historical Account," 1712, p. 12; and "Life of Gilbert Latey," 1707, p. 5.

† Intolerant petitions were sent into Parliament. It was stated that they "meet in multitudes upon the moors," "*in terrorum populi*," also that they will certainly overrun all, both ministers and magistrates; "ere long it will be too late to make a law."—"Letters of Early Friends," p. 51.

‡ Howgill writes, from London, to Margaret Fell, in 5th Month, 1655:—"Our army is most scattered and broken, and cast into prison."

while in London there was more liberty, and the work went on apace. Howgill and Burrough seem to have been furnished with a *carte blanche* as to funds.* “I shall take care,” writes Howgill to Margaret Fell, “for the supplyment of friends in these parts, and truly I fear lest the burden should be heavy on the North, for the charge is great and our camp great.” “The gathered congregations” in the City “lose their members so fast, they know not what to do.” The result of their labours raised up churches in London, which it is computed could not be under 10,000 members in 1678,† and if we add attenders, we shall see that the Society formed no small portion of the religious population of London.

* “If any ministers want, our friends F. and E. (*i.e.*, Francis and Edward) supply them; the charge truly is great, but our desire is to make it as easy as possibly we can.” —“Letters of Early Friends,” p. 35.

† “Letters of Early Friends,” p. 156.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS BY FOX, COEVAL WITH ITS RISE. THE GENERAL BAPTIST CHURCHES, THEIR "APOSTLES," "ELDERS," "DEACONS," "OVERSEERS," OR "VISITORS." THE CO-OPERATIVE INDEPENDENCY OF THESE CHURCHES, AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP. SIMILARITY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ANCIENT SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, THEIR CHURCH OFFICERS, THEIR MEMBERSHIP. ORIGINALLY AN ADULT MEMBERSHIP. THE BISHOP SUMMONSES THE QUAKERS TO GO TO "CHURCH" AS "BY LAW APPOINTED," AND THEIR REPLY. STRICTNESS OF THEIR DISCIPLINE. THEIR VIEWS ON BAPTISM AND ON THE LORD'S SUPPER. ONE OF THE EARLY PREACHERS BAPTIZES A CONVERT. THEY KEEP A "LOVE FEAST," AS "THE EARLY CHRISTIANS" DID, AT ABERDEEN.

It appears, that as early as 1652, Fox had commenced to organize the new Society. He states* that "the first meeting," which was "gathered" through his ministry "in the name of Jesus," was at Sedbergh in this year. Probably, about 1656, a General Meeting of the Society, "out of several counties, concerning the affairs of the Church,"† was established. "It was about business relating to the Church, both in this nation and beyond the seas."‡ Fox says, that after this meeting was set up, "divers Justices and Captains had come to break it up,

* See "Fox's Journal," 1660.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

but when they understood the business Friends had met about, and saw Friends' books and accounts, and collections for relief of the poor, how we took care—one county to help another—and to help our Friends beyond the sea, and provide for our poor, that none of them should be chargeable to their parishes, &c., the Justices and Officers confessed that we did their work, and would pass away peaceably and lovingly," "commending Friends' practice."*

It is, therefore, obvious that the organization of the meetings for discipline was coeval with the rise of the Society. There can be little doubt that the first churches, founded by Fox and the early preachers, were either constituted upon the principles of the earliest English General Baptist, or Mennonite Churches, or had a common origin in the scheme of Church government and discipline originally received by Menno from the Swiss Baptists, and developed by him. These churches were *independent* churches, co-operating in all matters connected with the ministry and the spread of the Gospel.

During the Commonwealth times, as the followers of John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, they held that there were only two orders of officers—Elders and Deacons. But it is a point of great importance, to notice that for the "gathering of churches and the establishment of them," certain Elders were chosen by an Association of the churches in a certain district, "and to them were committed the superintendence," and to a certain extent, "the government of those churches which united in calling them into office." This Association Meeting provided for the supply of ministry to the associated churches, and corresponds in this object precisely with what was called

* See "Fox's Journal," 1660.

“Ministers’ meeting” among the “Friends.” These were termed “Apostles,” or “Messengers.”* They held (as a consequence of the doctrine of general redemption) that since “the Gospel should be preached to every creature,” and that all nations were to be taught, it necessarily followed that “either somebody in special is bound to preach the Gospel to those that are without, to the nations that know it not, or else all Christians are equally bound to perform this work, if capable in respect of gifts, or else that this work ended with the Apostles.”† “That though it is most certain there were several things proper and peculiar to the first and chief Apostles, not to be pretended at all by their successors, the subordinate messengers, yet it is also true that many things pertaining to their office as *itinerant ministers* are of perpetual duration in the church with respect to that holy function, and consequently to descend to those who were to succeed them as *travelling ministers*, to plant churches and to settle them in order, who are as sheep without a shepherd.”‡ To prove that there was “a ministry of Apostles” remaining to the church to the end of the world, 1 Cor. xii. 28th verse, coupled with Ephes. iv. 8th and 11th verses, were quoted—where it is said that when Christ ascended, “He gave some Apostles and some Prophets,” &c. They contended that Epaphroditus, Barnabas, Luke,

* “The Faith and Order of 30 Congregations, annexed to the Creation and Fall of the first Adam, &c.” By Captain Robert Everard. London, 1649, pp. 5—8. “That it is the good pleasure of God, which hath given gifts of His grace, &c., that some of the gifted men should be appointed to attend upon the preaching of the Word for the further edifying of the churches, that they should stand against all opposition, &c.”—This rare work is in the Library of Chilwell College, near Nottingham.

† “Grantham’s Christianismus Primitivus.”—Book iv., Treatise 5, p. 154.—London, 1678. The reader may notice that he here confutes the opinion of the “Seekers.” See our remarks on the origin of the “Seekers.”

‡ Ibid., Book ii., chap. 9, p. 119.

Mark, Timothy, &c., were ministers of this order; not that it was a distinct order of men, as Bishops in the Church of England, but a distinct gift and function. They maintained that, although "we hold it unsafe to say that miraculous gifts are so ceased," yet the office of Apostle in these days "did not need them," and, almost in the words of the Early Friends when held to the same point, said, that although miracles were the sign of the chief Apostles, yet subordinate Apostles who did not come "to deliver new oracles and to abrogate old ones," either in the New Testament times or now, "needed no such signs."* They held, that "as God had given to His Church a fixed ministry of Bishops, Elders, Pastors, &c., to take care of particular churches, so hath he given her a travelling ministry, unfixed in respect of particular societies, to whom it appertains to take all occasions to cause the light of the glorious Gospel to shine unto such as sit in darkness; to plant churches, to confirm, or settle them in the faith, to visit and comfort those who have believed through grace."† "For the more convenient management of the great affairs of the Gospel, they may divide themselves into divers parts" (*i.e.*, of the country). They were furnished with "letters of commendation from the Church of Christ." They say "such testimonials are expedient for all."‡

Another General Baptist writer describes the work of the "travelling ministry," the "Apostles," or "messengers of the churches," as being to plant churches, ordain officers, set in order things that were wanting in all the churches, to defend the Gospel against gainsayers, and to travel up and down the world to perform the work.§ They had

* " Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus."—Book iv., Treatise 5, p. 163.

† Ibid., Book iv., Treatise 5, p. 165. ‡ Ibid., Book iv., Treatise 5, p. 170.

§ Hooke—" Orthodox Creed"—Art. 31.

"the government of those churches that had suffrage in their election, and no other;" they were therefore chosen by an association of churches. The fixed officers, the elders and deacons (the pastor being only an elder with a special gift of teaching), were chosen by particular churches. The travelling minister was also charged with the duty of seeing that "good order and government be carefully and constantly kept up,"* and "to assist faithful pastors or churches against usurpers, and those that trouble the peace of particular churches with false doctrines." The power of the travelling ministry, in ordaining elders, was confined to congregations newly planted, and who were, therefore, not in a condition to exercise the rights of a particular church.†

Therefore we see, that in the early General Baptist Churches, all "travelling Ministers" were "Elders," but all "Elders" were not "travelling Ministers." This was the case among the early Friends.‡ The travelling ministers being in labours more abundant, appear to have had a higher position accorded to them than the Elders,§ while in the churches of the General Baptists, and of early Friends, no "Governing Elders" existed, distinct from "Teaching Elders."|| The deacons' and deaconesses' office

* Taylor—Lincolnshire Association Minute, 1775.

† "Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus," Book iv., Treatise 5, p. 165.

‡ See paper by Fox in "Letters of Early Friends," pp. 311—317. Elders are here spoken of as co-extensive with ministers.

§ Kendal Meeting Minute, in York Library. "At our Yearly Meeting, held at Liverpool, the 11th of Second Month, 1710, the friends and brethren feel themselves engaged to continue the said Meeting the next year." It is to be held at Carlisle. "The Meeting for Ministers (*i.e.*, travelling ministers) to be held at one o'clock, and the Elders (*i.e.*, ministers who did not travel) to meet at the same time. They may be called *into the Ministers' Meeting IF SEEN FIT.*" The public meeting was to begin at 10 o'clock, "and end as near the twelfth hour as well can."

|| As late as 1733, "the Elders and Overseers of the Church" are exhorted, "both by example and precept, to *instruct the youth amongst us.*"—"Bristol and Somerset Records."

among the General Baptists, was “to take care of the necessities of the poor.”* Sometimes the office of “deacon” and “overseer, in the General Baptist Churches,” were exercised by the same person, and it is interesting to notice that the duties of the “overseers” in a General Baptist Church, and a particular Church of the Society of Friends, were identical.† The General Baptist overseers “took particular care of each member in their respective divisions (or districts), of their conversation and carriage, to take strict notice what disorders may arise, and to bring them regularly before the monthly (church) meeting.” They enforced a regular attendance at both “Meetings for Discipline” and on Sunday, and exercised vigilance over the conduct of the members, and even the ministers, in their families, in their business, in their connections, in civil society, and even in their recreations.‡

Among the early Friends this was also the duty of the “Overseers,” or “Deacons,” and the visiting of families from time to time, to repress outward departures, in dress, &c., from Christian simplicity. Occasionally, as in Ireland, or elsewhere, we have appointments of officers also called “visitors,” and “visiting Friends.”§ The overseers were

* Grantham, Book ii., chap. 9, p. 126.

† This identity is very obvious in the Minutes of the Irish Meetings. They were called in Ireland “visitors,” or “visiting Friends,” and were armed with similar powers of inspection.—“Leinster Minutes,” 1692. Two distinct appointments were made; the first, of “visiting Friends,” “to inspect into every respective meeting and particular family,” &c. The second, of persons “to take an account of the management of every respective meeting as in relation to worship, or concerning public Friends, or testimonies borne in meeting.” In these two appointments, *four out of the six persons were the same.*

‡ Taylor’s “General Baptists,” p. 435.—If they absent themselves without sufficient cause, “shall be looked upon as offenders, and be proceeded with accordingly.”—“Records of the Fenstanton Church,” p. 126, and *passim*.

§ In 1680, overseers were occasionally called “deacons.” See “Rodger’s Christian Quaker,” part iv., p. 7. “John Wilkinson’s” advice is, “that condemnations should

appointed from time to time for short periods. In matters connected with the "public" or "travelling ministry," no Minister was directly amenable to the ordinary Members of the Society, but solely to the Elders or ordinary Ministers,* united with the travelling Ministers. But in cases where an offence was committed against a member (not being an Elder either travelling or stationary) the matter came before the whole Church.† The analogy between the "Elders," "Deacons," and "Visitors," among the early Society of Friends, and the early General Baptists is, we conceive, nearly complete.

Again, we find that the travelling Ministers of the early Society of Friends exercised, from the earliest date, precisely the same powers and duties as those already described as

not stand on our *Deacon's books* to posterity." Also the word occurs as an equivalent in a MS. of 180 pages on the W. & S. Controversy, by John Blayling, R. Barrow, and others, in the author's possession.

Overseers are called "deacons" in a letter from R. Barrow to Aberdeen Monthly Meeting, dated 25th Eleventh Month, 1691; he states that as in the ancient times of the Christian Churches, so now "God hath ordained Elders and Deacons," i.e., among Friends. At a later period, 1693, it is stated that it was the practice, both in Ireland and many parts of England, to appoint these officers from *one quarter to another*. They were to have more especially upon them, the care and oversight of their members. They were to visit them in their families, and to give them advice in their meekness, wisdom, and love, as they might see needful.—(See J. Barclay's "Diary of Jaffray," Aberdeen edition, p. 362; see also, paper by G. Fox, reprinted in "Letters of Early Friends," p. 317. He says, exhorting Friends to the same course of conduct, "there was not a Church but they had their Elders, then there was more than *seven deacons*, when Elders were ordained in every Church.")

In some cases, however, as in the Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of Chesterfield, 29/10/1697, and 5/8/1698, "Overseers" and "Elders" are used as precisely co-extensive. A great deal of ambiguity is cleared up, by remembering that these were merely appointments from time to time, for pastoral care.

* In 1676 these are addressed by G. Fox as "Ministers" who are "*settled in places*," and are exhorted "to possess as if you did not; to be married as if you were not; to be loose to the world in the Lord's power, for God's oyle will be atop of all visible things. It is this which makes His lamp to burn to give light afar off."

† "The Spirit of Alexander, the Coppersmith," p. 12, by W. Penn, 1673.

belonging to the "apostles," "travelling ministers," or "messengers," of the churches among the General Baptists.* All doubt as to the functions of the Elders in the early Society who did not travel, is we think set at rest by an "advice," dated 1728, contained in the first edition of the Book of Discipline: "Advised, that Ministers, as well Elders as others, in all their *preaching, writing, and conversing about the things of God*, do keep to the form of sound words," &c. This was, however, inapplicable to "Elders" in 1801, because the nature of the office had been radically changed, and the Yearly Meeting (who used the 1st edition from which to compile the 2nd edition, viz., that of 1801) therefore struck out the words "as well elders as others."†

* Even to the "ordaining of Elders." See paper by G. Fox, "Letters of Early Friends," p. 317—"concerning our Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings." "And the Apostles, the Ministers of Christ, *ordained Elders* in every church. So you may see there was not a Church but had their Elders also."

† It is important to bear in mind, that the principle of John Smyth, of Amsterdam (see p. 102), that there was only one order of Elders, and that one person might teach, exhort, rule, &c., was accepted by the Society of Friends. The Travelling Ministers were not, therefore, a *distinct order* of persons, *but an office held for a period*. The same person, therefore, might be a Travelling Minister, an Elder or Stationary Minister, and a Deacon, Overseer, or Visitor at various times. Much obscurity in the early records, is cleared up by this consideration.

In Hardshaw Monthly Meeting minutes, 1703 and 1706, the author has, he thinks, identified one woman and one man who are called "Elders," at another period *travelling as Ministers with a certificate*. On the other hand, in Ellwood's "Antidote against Rodgers," 1682, p. 146., Rodgers has remarked that R. Barclay considers *the fittest to rule* in the church, those who have "*begotten them in the Gospel*." Ellwood replies that "some may be helpful and useful instruments in the government of the Church, who have not been employed in the *public ministry*,—that such *may* be concerned tho' *not so much as the others*, and concludes that "some then that were Elders that ruled, and ruled well too, who yet did not labour in word and doctrine." Perhaps the true explanation is, that some by their gifts in *private* labour, and in writing in defence of the truth, were suitable for Elders. The author has heard it said that Ellwood was an "Elder" of this kind, but has not had the opportunity of verifying it. This appears to us to be rather the private opinion of Ellwood, and possibly one which was gaining ground.

In 1693, in Ireland, it was desired that the **Elders**, and such as (were) thought fit by

We have already alluded to the views of Ainsworth, Robinson, and particularly of John Smyth of Amsterdam, the father of the General Baptists, on this point in church government. It was a point in which the early Independents, Baptists, and the Society of Friends, agreed with the celebrated Bishop Hall,* and the imposition of Lay Elders by parliament was more violently opposed than perhaps any other feature of the Presbyterian system.†

The *Membership* in the early General Baptist churches, was extended to those “who professed repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,” and the members

the Province or other Meetings to be concerned, may examine among themselves how far they are qualified for that service, and whether they are clear and exemplary in themselves, and have *a right concern on their spirits* for the *service and propagation of the blessed Truth.*

In 1692, it was desired by the National Meeting, “that there may be a Friend or two of every particular meeting appointed by the Province Meeting, to meet apart to *make enquiry*, and take account of the *management of every respective meeting as in relation to worship*, or concerning public Friends, or testimonies borne in meetings, to the end that if anything be amiss in anywise on that account, that advice and admonition may be given as occasion requires.” (This, however, is not the institution of the Elders in each church, but merely directions to the churches to form a national meeting, or central synod, of Elders delegated by each church, to exercise a central and not a local authority.) These persons appear to have been afterwards called “appointed,” or “standing elders.”

To show the contrast of ideas on the subject between the earlier and later Society, in Ireland in 1758, it is expressly said that it was *then* “thought fit not to nominate for Elders, *Friends concerned in the ministry*,” in order that they (the ministers) “may be more at liberty” for their service. In a word, the evidence appears to warrant the conclusion, that in the first institution of the Society, “elders” were “ministers;” and then, owing to the Story and Wilkinson controversy, the principle was contended for, that occasionally to assist ministers in the part of the elders’ business, which consisted in the control of public worship and ministry, a “lay elder” might be useful, this being the thin end of the wedge by which the control of worship and ministry was transferred from the ministers to a completely lay eldership.

* See quotation from Bishop Hall, Appendix to Chapter xxii.

† The celebrated Owen, and the other Independents, who were striving for the New England platform, tolerated lay Elders, but the system never took root in the Independent Churches.

were baptized (dipped) in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or in the name of Jesus Christ.* But they also declare, that unless men so professing and practising the order and form of Christ's doctrine, shall beautify the same with a holy and wise conversation in all godliness and honesty, the profession of the visible form will be rendered to them of none effect, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord.”† The fellowship of the members was “from their own free choice and mutual consent.” They used “no constraint but God's Word and Spirit, to persuade poor sinners to embrace Christ.” Infants were excluded on this principle, and were undoubtedly saved, because Christ takes away the sin of the first Adam.‡ The discipline, or church power, was exercised by the members and church officers in monthly meetings. Christ was regarded as the sole Governor of His church.§

It will give us a clearer view of the ecclesiastical polity of the Friends, if we deal with the Society, during the period from 1652 to 1668, as consisting of a series of independent congregations, established and linked together by a travelling ministry and eldership, and maintaining the same friendly relation and disposition to co-operate, as an “Association” of General Baptist churches, and holding as they did their “General Meetings,” but still practically “independent.” Some questions have arisen during the last few years, as to the precise nature of the Membership of the Society of Friends, as established by George Fox.

* Article XI. of a Declaration of Faith, &c., 1663, reprinted in “*Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus*,”—book ii., chap. v., p. 67.

† *Ibid.*, Art. 14, p. 69.

‡ *Ibid.*, Art. 10, p. 67.

§ Taylor, pp. 433, 435. “As soon as any General Baptist Churches had been gathered, they united to support a periodical meeting—such meeting was called an association, and was usually held quarterly, half-yearly, or annually.”—*Ibid.* 457. The Travelling Ministers or Elders were most frequently chosen representatives.

It is hoped that the facts here stated will place the matter in a clear and simple light before the reader.

The membership of the early Society of Friends was not a "birthright membership,"* but is defined thus: "All the *faithful* men and women in every country, city, and nation, whose *faith stands in the power of God, the Gospel of Christ*, and have *received this Gospel* and are in *possession* of this *Gospel*, the power of God—*they have a right to the power of the meeting* (*i.e.*, of the particular meeting), for they be heirs of the power and authority of the men and women's meetings."† All those persons who were deemed to be such, were admitted to the Disciplinary Church Meetings, or in case they were the children of members and deemed converted, were "*invited*," usually by the Elders or Ministers, to attend the meetings for business, with the consent of the members of that meeting.

"To be a member of a particular church of Christ," says Barclay in his Apology, "as this *inward work* is indispensably necessary, so is also the *outward profession* and belief in Jesus Christ, and those holy truths delivered by His Spirit" in the Scriptures. After "it ceased to be a reproach to be a Christian, men became such by *birth* and

* Fox held this view of church membership from the very beginning, in 1648. (See Journal.) "Dost thou call this wicked multitude a church? The Church is the pillar and ground of Truth, made up of living stones, living members—a spiritual household, of which Christ is the head."

† MS. Minutes of the Yearly Meeting, 1676, Devonshire House; also, MS. Book of Extracts and Minutes of the Yearly Meeting, 1676; also, Wheeler Street Meeting—a book of several things relating to the service of Truth, &c., headed "Meetings for Discipline," date 1676. A large number of these MS. books exist, being the originals of "The Book of Extracts," of a later period, containing minutes of the Yearly Meeting for the guidance of the churches, all of which contain this definition. This definition is often referred to, but the force of it is generally lost, by the use of the word "faithful" not conveying to us the idea both of *faith*, and *fidelity* to that faith expressed above.

*education, and not by conversion and renovation of spirit,"** says Barclay, little conceiving that the Christian Society he so ably defended, would ever so far forget the truths which its founders deemed essential to the existence of a visible church, as to convert its membership into a birthright membership, forming a church of a distinct number of families, after the model of the Jewish commonwealth, the members of which might be different from other men in consequence of their education and religious customs, but who might not even profess to be Christians, or possess any of the positive characteristics set forth in the New Testament as required by the members of a Christian church. The "outward profession of, and belief in, Jesus Christ, and those holy truths delivered by His Spirit in the Scriptures," required by the members, was however rather *evinced* to the officers of the church, and, as far as we can learn, not *openly professed* before the congregation.† It may be questioned whether this point was ever properly settled and defined. The consequence of this was, the shifting of the responsibility before God from the shoulders of *the applicant* for Membership, to that of the church, which ought only to be the judge of the *outward* conduct of the person applying.

Lists of *Members entitled to transact the business of the Church*, there is reason to believe, originally existed in every meeting. In the Association of Churches in Somerset,

* See the whole quotation.

† In the minutes of Hardshaw Monthly Meeting, 1796, we find:—"Convinced Friends' directed to attend Monthly Meeting *in person*, 'in order to their acceptance by it.'"

Third Month, 1703, p. 280 of Minutes of National Meeting, Ireland:—"Any Friends new convinced, or *young people*, *Friends' children*, their admittance to sit in men's meetings (*i.e.*, church meetings) to be by *the assent of the Men's Meeting of the place to which they belong, after application made by the party, or a Friend on his behalf.*"

In 1722, Joseph Pike complains of laxer practice creeping in in Ireland, with regard to the qualifications of members.—See p. 40, "Life," by J. Barclay.

such a list existed for each of the different Monthly Meetings.* In London also, such lists existed.† In Ireland such lists existed in *every* meeting. The minutes of the Irish meetings illustrate with great clearness, that the Christian fellowship of the early Society of Friends consisted of an *outside membership* of persons “professing with Friends,” and of a *strict or close membership*, in whose hands rested the church power as exercised in their church discipline;‡ and also evinces the existence of mere attenders of their meetings. In case of misconduct, the “Members proper” were *expelled from church meetings*, while the outside members were “*testified against*,” and if they condemned their conduct as unchristian and improper, their confession was either read

* See W. Tanner’s “Lectures on the Early History of the Society of Friends in Somerset.”—Bennett, London, 1858.

† See Beck and Ball’s “London Meetings,” pp. 253, 254:—“The Quarterly Meeting of London, 5th First Month, 1712, agreed that the Friends in their several quarters do take the opportunity to *bring the names of Friends that may be fit* to frequent our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings for the service of the Truth.”—Also Dublin minutes, Men’s Meeting, Fourth Month, 1733:—“A fair copy of the list of the members of this meeting to be drawn up.”

‡ A clear instance of the distinction between *membership* in the Society of Friends, and *attendance at meetings for worship*, occurs in the minutes of the Half-year’s Meeting of Dublin, in 1702. It was complained that manufactures of linen and woollen goods “*were made slightly*, and so of little service to the wearer,” and a concern came upon the meeting lest “any Friend” should bring dishonour upon the blessed Truth;” and therefore every Monthly Meeting was to distinctly declare to every individual manufacturer, that in case of “*refractory non-compliance*,” they may be informed, “without respect of persons,” that “according to the judgment of the Half-year’s Meeting formerly given, “*they forfeit their privilege in sitting in their men and women’s meetings;*” that is, they were ejected from their membership in the meetings for church government. In the Leinster Half-year Meeting, 5th of Ninth Month, 1696, Friends who refused to have their differences settled by the Church, were to be suspended from sitting in meetings for discipline. In 1697, “company keeping smoakers,” and persons addicted to drinking, were to be likewise suspended.

A paper was ordered to be read, in 1720, against “a careless, sleepy, slothful spirit,” “at suitable seasons, *not only amongst those who are members* of men and women’s meetings, but *others* who profess the blessed Truth and frequent our meetings for worship.”

In 1720, the meetings had been desired not to limit too closely the membership

at the public meeting before the commencement of worship, or in some cases at the *place* where the offence against the public had been committed. When the Members "proper" were seriously to blame, they were not only expelled from the church meetings, but publicly testified against *in addition*. Not only so, but the Yearly Meeting ordered that their names were to be entered in a book to be provided in every church.* The entry of the condemnation of the offence was duly signed by them if they were restored as penitent. This, we shall see was, at a later period, made a serious cause of complaint and controversy—see page 465. The mere attenders ran some risk in attending their meetings, if they married each other "by a priest," for they were forthwith repudiated in a public document.†

which conferred church power, and are directed to "encourage such who are of an orderly conversation, and well inclined to come up into a *nearer fellowship* and service, by admitting them into the men's meeting when the affairs of Truth are managed."—National Meeting's Minutes, Ninth Month, 1720.

When Birthright Membership was instituted in Ireland, in 11th Month, 1762, the following minute was made, which throws a clear light upon the subject—"All our youth even capable of understanding, and other Friends properly in unity, that is, who are not disowned or under dealing, are to be looked upon (*i.e.*, in future) as *proper members*, and have liberty to attend our Men and Women's Meetings for Discipline, of which Friends are desired to give notice *in* their respective particular meetings; and it is the further judgment of this meeting, that no particular *lists of members* of men and women's meetings be retained in use—the intent of this minute being *to remove every distinction of members*, except between those who are in unity and not in unity with the Society."

Keith gives as a proof of a certain number (sixty persons, attenders of meetings for worship) being Friends, that most of them "used to keep Monthly Meetings;" and Ellwood replies that, therefore, nine-and-twenty out of sixty "might be raw or loose persons." Page 28, "An Epistle to Friends," to beware, &c. Keith Controversy, London, 1694.

* Minute of Yearly Meeting, 1675:—"Advised that the Church's testimony and judgment against disorderly and scandalous walkers, and also the repentance of the parties restored, be recorded in a book, &c.—to be produced and published by Friends, as in God's heavenly wisdom they shall see needful."

† "Matthew Fountain having married Susannah Barker, by a priest, and they having pretty much of late frequented meetings, and are by some accounted of us," a deputa-

Such was their zeal that their membership should remain according to "the first institution" of "faithful men and women," that in Dublin meeting, in 1707, "a serious search and examination" was instituted as to the *fitness of those whose names were entered on the list of members.* The first meeting for the purpose was, they say, "chiefly spent in speaking one to another and opening their condition freely one to another." The result was, that all were rejected who did not "answer their places and service with zeal and earnestness, for the *prosperity of Truth and preservation of Friends* within the bounds and limits thereof." The strictness with which the church power was held in the hands of those only who could be trusted with it, was so great, that in 1680 some young men established an evening meeting for worship in Dublin; not only were these young men not members, but they were summoned before the church to explain the course they were taking. Their membership was therefore an *adult membership carefully sifted by human skill or discernment*, and not claimed on broad Christian principles as a *right*. The tendency of this strictness of the terms of membership, does not appear in itself to have diminished the numbers of the Society of Friends in Ireland.*

It is obvious that the error they gradually fell into, was the omission of what Barclay held to be "*indispensably necessary*," viz., "*the outward profession of, and belief in, Jesus Christ, and those holy truths declared by His Spirit*

tion is sent to "know if they look upon themselves as Friends, and what they have to say why Friends should not give out a testimony against them." "They were spoke unto, and do not seem to have anything to offer why Friends should not disown them."

* In 1701 there were 24 meetings in Leinster, while in 1748 there were 29, which (when the extraordinary carrying out of the Theocratic government, to be afterwards explained, is taken into account) seems to leave little doubt that this was the case.

in the Scriptures." Had this point been clearly seen, and incorporated into their church system with sufficient precision, it would have *thrown upon applicants for membership* the solemn responsibility of a public profession of faith in Christ. A religious society which undertakes by any system, or by the supposed infallible spiritual insight of its officers, to decide whether men and women are fit members of a Christian church, *merely by their outward conduct*, without this voluntary and *purely personal confession*, will pave the way as certainly for a declension in religion, as it will by a too great laxity in publicly expelling members who break the moral law of Christ. They intruded the responsibility of the Church into a province where the responsibility was purely individual and personal.

It is obvious that the persons who possessed the "power of the Meeting," or Church power, were really "the Church," and that these were to be *converted* persons whose conduct evinced that they had *a living faith* in Christ, is sufficiently evident from the foregoing extracts. The denial of the appellation of "Church," not only to the buildings, but to the congregations of the parish assemblies, because they were "mixed multitudes," brought together by the strong arm of the law and kept together by pains and penalties, was common to the early Independents, the Baptists, and the Society of Friends. The basis of membership was the same (as may be seen by the foregoing extracts) in the early Society of Friends as among the Baptists,—setting aside the rite of baptism.*

To illustrate the stand point of the Founders of the Society

* "The sincere confession with the mouth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," was deemed by Penn to be "sufficient now to entitle a man to communion here and salvation hereafter."—Penn's Works, vol. i., p. 756; edition 1726.—Address to Protestants.

as to their definition of the Membership of "a church," we may mention that at the period after the Act of Uniformity, when attendance at the parish church and the non-attendance of conventicles were attempted to be rigorously enforced, under penalties which might amount to the confiscation of all their property, transportation and slavery "in any of his Majesty's plantations beyond the seas,"* the Bishop's official, at his visitation in July, 1663, sent the following question to the Friends in several places in Westmoreland:—"To the people called Quakers, &c.: "Why do you not come to your parish church, or the place of public worship appointed by the laws of the land, to hear Divine Service and to join in prayer with the congregation, and to perform other rites and ceremonies according to the Church of England?" The "Book of Common Prayer" had the effect at that time of something quite new, even to the worshippers in the churches, and a little criticism of the prayers of the Church was not altogether unwelcome even to them. The early Friends did not neglect the opportunity of giving him their reasons why they did not "go to Church"—much doubtless to the amusement of the other Separatists in the district. "First," say they, "the Apostle saith, let every man be fully persuaded *in his own mind.*" Now, *we* are *not* persuaded in *our* minds, either that God requireth it of us to come to these places to worship Him, or that it can be proved by the Holy Scriptures according to the practice of the saints, that we ought to come to these places to worship Him. Secondly, because we are *not* persuaded in our minds, and that upon good grounds and reasons according to the Holy Scriptures, that the priests who serve "the

* See "Besse's Sufferings," preface pp. 9, 11, and 12.

Cure " (so called) *are* ministers of Jesus Christ, *sent* of God, but are much persuaded in our minds that God never sent them, and that for these four reasons." The first was, their "*call*" was not that of the ministers of Christ—it was a "*call of man*." *They* were men who were "*time servers*." They were "*covenant breakers*," for they had taken the Solemn League and Covenant, and now "*abjured the covenant*." They had "*a face to serve every turn and time*." They long ago had confessed they had not "*the same infallible Spirit which the Apostles had*," and "*what Spirit had entered into them since, let those that fear the Lord judge!*" Their practice was like the practice of the false Prophets; for example, Balaam, "*seeking greedily after gifts and rewards, and preparing war*" against those who refused to support them. They denied "*the light of Christ*" to be sufficient "*to guide in the ways of peace*." "*They say 'all they do is sin,' their 'best actions are sin,' 'their prayers are sin'* (to this we consent !) therefore, they are not the prayers of the upright which God delights in!" And for these and other reasons, they were persuaded they "*ought not to hear them*." So far for the Ministers. Then as to their flocks. "*We come not to these places, because we are not fully persuaded in our minds that the people there met together are the true Church of Christ, or His members.*" Why was this? Because the people there, being *compelled* to go to church (many of them being the worst people in the parish, such as never show their faces in a church now the attendance is voluntary) confess themselves "*a company (not of saints but) of 'miserable sinners,' that err and stray like lost sheep, and are grievous offenders of God's holy law.*" They did not deny, they said, that "*there is a time when people do so err and are out of the right way, but this in the 'unconverted state.'*" Still,

"such," they say, "are *not* the church of Christ, nor members of His body." Not only so, "the people there met together do that which they ought not to have done, and leave undone that which they ought to have done," and "so are breakers of their covenants and vows made in their baptism, which promised that they would 'forsake the devil and all his works, and the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh,'" &c.; but now they "offend grievously God's holy laws, and leave that undone which they should do." But to sum up all, and to show that they are not "the true church," they confess that "they have no *health* in them;" therefore, we are not persuaded in our minds that we ought to join with them, and "worship among people who 'have no *health* in them,'" "in the places which were old Mass-houses;" but they say they shall continue to worship with "the saints," of whom the Apostle saith, "such *were* some of you, but you *are washed*, but you *are sanctified*, but you *are justified*, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Two things may be clearly seen from this incident—first, the extreme absurdity of the position in which the Bishop was placed, of asking men to attend, or give their reason for not attending, their parish church, while (whether convinced or unconvinced) they were liable to penalties which might cost them their property, their liberty, or even their lives. Secondly, it exhibits the view of the early Friends respecting Church Membership. They did not reply thus to the Bishop, because they held that there were *no true Christians* who worshipped in the "steeple-house," or because the congregation consisted partly of unconverted persons, but because they held that a "Church" was a society of converted men and women *separated from the world*. Now if *all the world* were to be forced by the magistrate to

assemble, it could not be called a "congregation of faithful people" showing their faith by the church act of voluntarily assembling of themselves for the worship of God. It was not the denial of every Body but their own to be a true church, because they did not deny the Independent and Baptist churches to be true churches, and therefore the objection relates solely to the question of church membership. The question of "a call" to the ministry, evidently relates to the nature of the Presbyterian ordination. Their views on the infallibility of the church (of which we shall treat more fully hereafter) required a church membership of extraordinary strictness. So far forth as the visible church society consisted of "faithful men," *so far forth* they held it was infallible. But while this was the case in reference to the members who held the church power, they had, as we have explained, a kind of *outside* membership which depended upon the attendance of the meetings for worship, and which entitled "those professing with Friends" to pastoral oversight, and, in case of necessity, to pecuniary help and relief.

This appears to us to have been a link between the outside world and the Church, something similar to the Wesleyan membership, which embraces the "convinced of sin," and the "sinner seeking salvation," and provides for a certain amount of religious oversight; and this will broadly explain the distinction between a member of the ancient Society of Friends who was entitled to attend their meetings for discipline, and one who was merely an attender of their meetings for worship. It was precisely the difference, in the words of an old Friend's pamphlet, between a "convinced" and a "converted" state. If the person was deemed by the Elders of the church to be "converted," it was proposed to "invite" him to a participation of the

church power of their meetings for discipline,* but if only "convinced," he was merely a participator in *church privileges*. This accounts for the comparatively small number of those who took part in the administration of the church affairs, compared with the size of their congregations. The wording of their church censures appears to bear out the same view. The offender is generally required to set his name to a "paper of condemnation," condemning his wicked practice, and "clearing Friends" of any approval of it. In flagrant cases of public scandal they occasionally required him to affix his "paper of condemnation or denial" to the market cross, and so clear the Society with whom he had associated himself by attending their worship so as to be "reputed as a Friend." On his due repentance he was immediately re-instated, but it does not appear that such a person would in the early Society have had any participation in their meetings for discipline. A "paper of denial" appears to have been an act of absolute expulsion.†

As far as our investigations have gone, anything like a formal and public profession of faith in Christ appeared to

* He was then, in the language of the Y. M. minute of 1704, *worthy* to be esteemed a member of those meetings. "Youth" was no disqualification, but "the life of righteousness" was essential. As late as 1722, Friends are advised in their meetings to act in a way "exemplary" to the "young who may be esteemed members of these meetings, and attend the same," showing that all the young were not esteemed members.

† The rule appears to have been, that if the offence was a private one, only affecting members of the congregation, the paper of condemnation was private; if, on the contrary, it affected the public, or the interests of morality, it was to be published *as widely as the offence*.

Specimen of a paper of denial, or absolute expulsion:—It "was ordered that some copies of it should be spread among the people at Corstorphine, where they live," and "that it should be also read over next First-day at meeting, at Edinburgh, the copy of which testimony is as follows:—"This is to let all persons know, who may hear or read these presents, that we the people of God, called in derision Quakers, belonging to the meeting at Edinburgh, deny and disown James Wear, weaver, in Corstorphine, and his wife, Jean Blair, to be of our *fellowship* in the holy Truth and *profession* that

savour too much of ceremony to be adopted by the Society established by Fox, and their practice seems to have corresponded exactly with that of the Mennonite Baptists, with whom, however, the profession of faith in Christ, and of baptism, was *entirely distinct* from the reception of the convert into the church, or society of believers.*

The essential principle from which G. Fox started, denied the necessity of any outward rite in a dispensation which was purely spiritual, and in which all the rites and ceremonies of the Old Covenant were abolished, and therefore he simply dropped the ceremony of an open and public profession of faith and baptism, and retained the same method adopted among the Mennonites, for the reception of the convert into close fellowship with the particular church, which was distinct from the ceremony of Baptism. It is, however, interesting to find that one of the early preachers in connection with Fox—Humphrey Wooldrig—baptized a convert. This happened in 1658. Wooldrig wrote to Fox, stating that another minister† had “judged him for it,” and denied him (Wooldrig) and that which led him into it, and *all who owned him in it.*”‡ It appears, therefore,

is ordered and professed by us, and this because of their disorderly and unsuitable walking unto the same. From the people of God, called Quakers, given forth at Edinburgh, 1st of Second Month, 1673.”

On the 5th of Twelfth Month, 1701, Kinmuck Monthly Meeting had Ester Robinson’s testimony (of Kelso) “fixed on the door of the steeple-house.”

In 1708, the Yearly Meeting gave a caution “not to admit such persons too early into fellowship,” before there was good ground for believing the repentance genuine. This was given because many persons had conceived that on signing such a paper they were “discharged.”

* These views respecting the membership of the early Society, are results generalized from a vast mass of church books and other MSS. See preface, pp. iii. iv.

† John Harwood, who was afterwards separated from the Society and opposed the authority of Fox.

‡ “Swarthmore Papers,” 1658, No. 4.

that there were some who supported him in this, and there can be little doubt that this was a special case and rather for the satisfaction and comfort of the convert.* Fox was attacked because he did not excommunicate Wooldrig. He says he "did not utterly deny Humphrey's wrong and deny him;" that Wooldrig "simply did such a thing once and no more."† Wooldrig evidently wrote to Fox in full confidence, that if done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the action would be approved by him, and says that his opponents "would limit the unlimited God."‡

The stand point of the early Society with reference to baptism and the Lord's Supper, appears to have been that the outward action was indifferent and not certainly a subject of church censure, and it is clearly so stated in Barclay's *Apology*.§ We have before noticed the

* We find, however, in the "Swarthmore Papers," that in Somersetshire "some baptize." 20th Ninth Month, 1660. See page 343.

† "The Spirit of Envy, Lying, and Prosecution made manifest." An answer to a scandalous paper of John Harwood, &c. By George Fox, London, 1663, p. 5.

‡ Wooldrig afterwards wrote a tract upon the subject: "The Unlimited God," &c., London, 1659. Page 1, he says that Paul did baptize, although not "sent to baptize," and did "all things to save some." Page 2. He tells us "the woman declared that she was moved of the Lord to desire me only to baptize her with water, and that the spirit by which the Baptists are led did not *convince her*. The Baptist's teacher said that some of them did believe she was led by the Spirit of God. He afterwards wrote a book to the Baptists, and told them they were setting up types and shadows above Christ.

§ "And indeed I am inclinable very favorably to judge of Calvin in this particular, in that he deals so ingeniously to confess he *neither comprehends it nor can express it in words, but yet by a feeling experience can say the Lord is spiritually present*. Now, as I doubt not but Calvin sometimes had a sense of His presence without the use of this ceremony, so as the understanding given him of God made him justly reject the false notions of transubstantiation and consubstantiation. . . . Lastly, if any *now at this day*, from a true tenderness of spirit, and with real conscience towards God, did practise this ceremony in *the same way, method, and manner as did the primitive Christians* recorded in Scripture (which yet none that I know *now do*), I should not doubt to affirm but they might be indulged in it, *and the Lord might regard them*, and for a season appear to them in the use of these things, as many of us have known Him to do to us in the time of our ignorance, provided they did not seek

views of Caspar Schwenkfeld, and explained how these views were held by certain Baptists, who, prior to the preaching of Fox, had laid aside the Lord's Supper and Water Baptism. At the period when Fox commenced preaching, the practice of partaking of the Lord's Supper had fallen much into disuse in some places, in consequence of a doubt on the mind of the Presbyterian ministers whether it could be rightly partaken of in a church, without "ruling Elders."* The early General Baptists generally, if not universally, had a common meal or "love feast," and partook of the Lord's Supper after it, according to Scripture

to obtrude them upon others, nor judge such as found themselves delivered from them, or that they do not pertinaciously adhere to them. For we certainly know that the day is dawned, in which God hath arisen and hath dismissed all these ceremonies and rites, and is only to be worshipped in *Spirit*, and that He appears to them who wait upon Him; and that to seek God in these things is, with Mary at the Sepulchre, to *seek the living among the dead*, for we know that He is *risen and revealed in Spirit*, leading His children out of these rudiments that they may walk with Him in His light."

In a paper signed by William Penn, A. Sharp, Thomas Story, and George Rook, entitled "Gospel Truths"—published in Dublin in 1698—they say: "We believe the necessity of the one baptism of Christ as well as of His one supper, which He promised to eat with those that open the door of their hearts to Him, being the baptism and supper signified by the outward signs, which though we disuse, *we judge not those that conscientiously practise them.*"

Again, George Bishop, an eminent member of the Bristol meeting, says, in 1665*—speaking of the Lord's Supper—"I say if any do so think and receive it *as it should be*, or *as they* (*i.e.*, the Corinthians) *did it* who did not eat and drink unworthily. . . . we shall not and do not judge them. But let not such take upon themselves to judge those who know and witness Him (the Lord) to be come (*i.e.*, spiritually) of whom that (*i.e.*, the Lord's Supper) was a remembrance." In other words, a man might be a Christian in the full sense of the word, whether he partook or did not partake of the outward supper. See also note, p. 526.

* Page 36. "A Vindication of the Practice of the People called Quakers."—1665.

* "The want of Church Government is no warrant for a total omission of the Lord's Supper," &c. By Henry Jeanes, minister at Chedzoy, Somersetshire. Oxford, 1653.

A "Treatise of Spiritual Infatuation," &c., by W. Stamp, D.D., "One of the imprisoned, exiled, plundered ministers of God's Word, at Stepney, near London."—Hague, 1653, states, that he is "credibly informed, that at Lincoln the sacramental bread and wine hath not been communicated for three years together."

precedent of the "cup after supper," and there are strong reasons for believing, that in the early Society of Friends, "love feasts" or meetings for Christian communion were held. In the earliest tracts of Fox we continually find the expressions, "we have the Lord's Supper," "the table and supper of the Lord we own," &c., and a constant denial that the method in which it was administered by others was according to apostolic practice, which seems to have been beside the mark, if no practice existed among the Society, which had some analogy to it.

In Keith's "Presbyterian and Independent Visible Churches, in New England and elsewhere, brought to the Test"—London, 1689*—we find an allusion to certain "more solemn eatings and drinkings to remember the *Lord's death, and what he hath done and suffered for us,*" and states that the Society of Friends did "thus eat and drink together, perhaps many belonging to divers families," and yet these are distinguished from the ordinary meals of Christians, at which he asserts by prayer and thanksgiving the spiritual bread may be partaken of;† and yet he lays it down "that we neither do, nor can *limit* the spiritual and inward eating of Christ's body, and drinking of His blood, to any outward eating and drinking whatsoever, as neither did the ancient Christians, who said "that all believers eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood daily and hourly," "and so we believe."‡ Keith was then (1689) a valued minister of the Society. He was a learned Scotchman, and was an intimate friend of R. Barclay, but was afterwards expelled from the Society.§ He became a clergyman of the

* Edition 1691, p. 188.

† Ibid. pp. 187 and 188.

‡ Ibid. p. 188.

§ Keith was not, as some have supposed, expelled for his doctrinal opinions, but for his unbearable temper and carriage. Every effort was made to retain him as a member. Many of his old associates deeply regretted the change in his Christian character, but

Church of England, and was one of the first missionaries of that body sent out by the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel." We cannot avoid the conclusion, that Keith is here alluding to some distinct description of religious meeting, at which there was an outward repast in remembrance, as he states, "of the Lord's death," and we have found in the minutes of Aberdeen Quarterly Meeting, a meeting of the Church, which so closely corresponds to this statement of Keith's, that it furnishes an interesting illustration of his meaning. When we consider the character of the Quarterly Meeting of Aberdeen, containing as it did some of the most eminent members of the Society, men of the highest education and intelligence, it must be regarded as another curious link in the evidence which connects the practices of the early General Baptist and the early Society of Friends. The distinct reference in the minute to the Agapœ of the Primitive Christian Church, places the character of these meetings, held from house to house, in our view beyond a doubt. The quotation from Keith would seem to imply a general practice, but we have found no entry in the minutes of any other meeting.*

As a confirmation of the whole matter, we may note that Barclay says in his Apology :—"And this by some is called

it is difficult to see, after his return from America, how he could have remained a member. He was, probably, doctrinally right in his American quarrel, but morally wrong in the conduct of it and his subsequent conduct.—A very graphic and interesting account of the discussions of the Yearly Meeting on his case, exists in the Y.M. MS. minutes, vol. ii., at Devonshire House, and the conduct of the Society is fully vindicated. His *doctrine was approved*, but his conduct condemned. Had he been more gentle in his conduct, he would have effected beneficially what he failed in effecting by an opposite course.

* We have not succeeded in finding, in the Aberdeen minute book, any entry of their establishment, and we may therefore conclude certainly that they dated as far back as 1688, and probably if the allusion in George Fox's tracts relate to this, were coeval with the rise of the Society.

a Love Feast, or a being together not *merely* to eat and to drink, or for outward ends, but to take thence occasion to eat and drink together in the dread and presence of the Lord, *as His people*, WHICH CUSTOM WE SHALL NOT CONDEMN." In this place it will be found that he is contending that the communion of the early Christians was *not a sacramental act*, or "*some solemn sacrifice.*"

The following is the minute referred to:—"At the Quarterly Meeting at Aberdeen, 9th of Ninth Month, 1693. At this meeting a line of P. L. (Patrick Livingston) being read, containing a motion of some Friends of changing the Seventh-day's meetings from the afternoon to begin in the forenoon, and also making it circulatory through Friends' families in town for propagating Truth, and being a *consolatory repast* (*as among the primitive Christians*) from house to house," &c.*

The Lord's Supper was not only placed by the party represented by Archbishop Laud, on the same footing as the Mass, but also on the Restoration of the Anglican Church

* It was left by this meeting to Friends in town for their consideration, against the next Fourth-day's weekly meeting. And at the said Fourth-day's meeting (15th of Ninth Month) it was concluded so to be in time coming, and settled in the following method and course, to begin the next Seventh-day at—1st, at Jean Craig's, 18th of Ninth Month; 2nd, at Alex. Gillies, 25th of Ninth Month; 3rd, at Isabel Gerard's, 2nd of Tenth Month; 4th, at Mary Bannerman's, 9th of Tenth Month; 5th, at Isabel Grey's, 16th of Tenth Month; 6th, at William Taylor's, 23rd of Tenth Month; 7th, at John Hall's, 30th of Tenth Month; 8th, at Lilius Skene's, 6th of Eleventh Month; 9th, at Thomas Mercer's, 13th of Eleventh Month; 10th, at Robert Gorden's, 20th of Eleventh Month; and then to begin again and go round in the same manner.

At Monthly Meeting, 24th of Eleventh Month, 1693, there is granted one of the Seventh-day meetings to Elspit Stevens, at her own desire, which is to be the next after Robert Gorden, being to be the last.

"Upon the 12th day of Third Month, 1694, came to Aberdeen, to that day's circulating meeting (which fell that day at Isabel Gerrard's), a very worthy English woman Friend, named Helen Stockdaill, who had a singular presence of the Lord attending her, and thereby very good service and suitable to the conditions of Friends among us (and) for two weeks after."

party, while driving unwilling Separatists to church, they inflicted a small fine on communion Sundays on those who did not partake*—a practice which has been revived (at Exeter) in our day, and which is probably a custom handed down from Roman Catholic times.

* It also appears that 2d. was demanded from all the worshippers in church on the days on which the Lord's Supper was administered, whether the parties communicated or not. See p. 67—"John Baptist Decreasing, and Christ Increasing"—by John Grattan, a well-wisher of the Anabaptists, in 1674; London edition, 1696.—"That this is a new ordinance erect instead of the passover." "This I find not, no, nor (that) those *who would stay and eat should pay 2d*, and those who *would not* shouold *pay likewise*, eat or not eat, *pay you must*—this we find nothing of!"

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XV.

MS. FROM "SWARTHMORE PAPERS," IN POSSESSION OF THE AUTHOR, SHOWING THE NATURE
OF THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF THE ANCIENT SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, &c.

NOTE BY AUTHOR.—There is no date to this document. It is not certain whether "the Church of England" means the Anglican Establishment, because in section seven, Burrough says he has denied "the Church of England many years." He died in 1662. We should, therefore, incline to the view that the date of the paper is 1661, when the Established Church was in a transition state between Presbyterianism and Anglicanism. This document, it will be readily seen, does not intend to reflect uncharitably upon either Anglicanism or Presbyterianism; but the two points on which the whole document hinges, are: First, that "members" in the outward and visible Church should consist of persons who *voluntarily profess* that "they have peace with God in their consciences, through the faith of Christ, which gives victory over all sin," and who "have assurance through faith, of the love and favour of God," and that persons who profess to belong to the Church of Christ in consequence of "force and violence," or from any other unworthy cause, are not the right description of members; consequently a church consisting of a mixed company of persons is not a true and scripturally constituted visible Church. Secondly, the nature of the Christian Ministry, which ought to consist of such members who are considered by their fellow members as "sent of Christ into that work," and not such as follow it for emolument, although it may be seen at p. 272 of this work, that Burrough approved of a full and liberal maintenance being voluntarily given by the Church itself to its Ministers. It may also be remarked, that this document entirely negatives the idea which has been current for at least a century in the Society of Friends, that the Membership of the early Society of Friends was a "Birthright," or hereditary Membership.

SOME FEW REASONS SHOWING WHY WE DENY THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, AND ARE OF THIS WAY, AND SUCH WHO ARE SCORNFULLY CALLED QUAKERS.

"First and chiefly, because the Church of England (so called) is not the true Church of Christ, nor his wife, nor body, but a false church having the form but not the power.

Secondly, why she is a false church. Because she is not constituted of right members, but made up of members which are not born again, nor renewed in mind and heart; and of such members only doth the true Church of Christ consist: but the Church of England consists of the contrary, that is to say, of drunkards and covetous persons, &c., who are in the way of sin and death and are not renewed and born again, and this is one reason that gives us to believe that the Church of England is a false Church.

Thirdly. Because she is not in the same power of God as the Church of Christ in the days of the Apostles, but is in the form without the power; wanting the Spirit and the anointing which every member of the true Church ought to have; but she hath taken up the imitations of such doctrines and practices from the letter, without the same power and spirit of the Apostles and true Church which were in the days of old.

Fourthly. Because she practiseth such things for ordinances and worship, in such form and manner as the Scripture gives no example for; nor did the Apostles give commandment for such things, in many particulars (which) might be instance wherein she is out of the example of the true Churches of Christ in the Apostles' days; so that every part of her worship which seems to be by example from the Scriptures is not in the same power and Spirit of God as the churches of old were in, and other parts of her ordinances and worship are mere inventions and traditions, without example at all from the Scriptures.

Fifthly. Because the Spirit of God alone is not the rule of her Government and discipline in the Church, neither do they walk by that rule, but make the commandment of men, traditions, and antiquities of times, and the example of the fathers (so called) of former generations the rules of Church government and discipline; which ought not to be, but the Spirit of Christ is the only rule of the government and discipline of the true Church of Christ.¹

Sixthly. Because her ministry is not the true ministry of Christ *sent of Him* into that work, but are generally such persons as all the prophets, Christ and his Apostles cried against. I say the ministry of the Church of England is not a true ministry, but is of another spirit; even such they are as Isaiah cried against, Chapter lvi. 11, and such as Micah cried against, Mic. iii. 11, and such as Paul spoke against, Tit. . . . that sought their gain from their quarter, and sought for filthy lucre, and such as they Christ never sent, nor are these true ministers of his Church, but such as these are the ministers of the Church of England.

Seventhly. Because that the Church of England doth *force and compel by force and violence upon pains and forfeiture (upon men's persons and estates) to be of their church,* and imposed faith, doctrine, ordinances, and practices upon the people in the ignorance of conscience, and contrary to conscience, and *will not allow unto men the liberty of their consciences in spiritual things*, according as the Spirit of God persuaded them, and this is *as Antichrist*, and not of the true church, and these things are (with divers others) reasons wherefore we deny the Church of England, and have done this many years, neither can we ever turn to her again till these things be answered, and all doubts and scruples in our conscience resolved in these particulars, and some others we have to object.

And for being termed Quakers (so called), we were induced thereto from these reasons:—

Firstly, and chiefly. Because the Spirit of God, in our conscience persuaded us to the truth of this way, and not any outward cause or motives, but because of the Spirit of God convincing our hearts inwardly of the verity, righteousness, and truth, of this way in which we are.

Secondly. Because this way of religion is *according to the Scriptures*, and in the fulfilling of *them* in doctrine, practice, and conversation, and the ministry, ordinances, church government, and discipline (and) is in the same power and Spirit, and by the *example of the Apostles*; for the Spirit of God which did convince our consciences of the truth of this way, leads us in the same way as the servants of God walked in doctrines and practices.

Thirdly. Because this was (and) is persecuted and spoken all manner of evil of, falsely, for the name of Christ, which shows that this way is of God, and answerable to the Scriptures, because the same things are come to pass upon us Christ said should come, and that for righteousness sake and not for evil doing.

Fourthly. Because we have peace with God in our consciences in this way, through the faith of Christ which gives victory over all sin, and our souls are satisfied with the bread of life, and we receive of the mercies of God in our souls, and His Spirit leads us into all truth to do and to speak the truth, and to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

Fifthly. Because we have assurance, through faith, of the love and favour of the Lord God, and have obtained the rest where comfort and satisfaction is enjoyed, and the body of sin put off, and Christ the new man put on, and *our whole church consisteth of such members*; and *none but such* are members of our church, but who knows something of the seed of God, nor *is any owned in fellowship* with us, but who knows something of God in them to guide them.

And these are some few reasons wherefore we are of this way, and such who are in scorn called Quakers."

E. B., i.e., EDWARD BURROUGH.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE POSITION OF THE TRAVELLING MINISTRY IN THE SOCIETY.

THE METHOD OF THEIR "ORDERLY DISPERSION" ACCORDING TO THE NECESSITIES OF THE CHURCHES. THEIR CONTROL TRANSFERRED BY FOX FROM HIMSELF TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS IN LONDON. WOMEN PREACHERS ALLOWED TO SUPPLEMENT THE WORK OF THE "BRETHREN," BUT NOT TO DIRECT AFFAIRS RELATING TO THE MINISTRY. THE "MINISTERS' MEETINGS," THEIR SPIRITUAL LIFE AND ENERGY. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHURCH OFFICERS SIMULTANEOUS WITH THE RISE OF THE SOCIETY. THE GRADUAL CHANGE FROM AN "INDEPENDENT" TO A "CONNEXIONAL" CHURCH SYSTEM; "CANONS OF GEORGE FOX." THE MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP. SILENT PRAYER. DISUSE OF THE BIBLE IN WORSHIP AND ITS ORIGIN. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRAL YEARLY MEETING IN LONDON. THE ACTION OF FOX RESPECTING MARRIAGE.

THE travelling ministry in the early Society of Friends possessed great power and importance, and it was maintained as one of their distinctive principles that every minister should, after Apostolic practice, travel. Naylor affirmed that Baxter was not a true Minister because he did not travel.* Keith charges the Presbyterians and Independents of New England, that if they have received a commission in Mat. xxviii.: "Ye are very unfaithful unto

* Quakers' Catechism.

it." They go, he says, unto a house or town and there teach "a few that come to hear you." So did not the Apostles, but *travelled* from place to place, and from one nation, city and country to another, but so do not ye.* The Calvinistic Baptists, &c., did not generally travel or approve the practice, and their "Messengers" appear to have differed essentially from the "Messengers" of the General Baptists. Thomas Pollard, of "the Church of Christ gathered in and about Leichfield," says: "And to you, Farnsworth, and the rest that walk up and down and live idly without a calling, if you would observe the Scripture for a rule, you would see what Paul saith, 'If any would not *work* neither should he eat.'" Here we have a pastor of an Independent Church complaining that one of Fox's preachers does not work at a trade! †

We now come to the very simple machinery by which this travelling ministry was, at this early period, regulated and applied to the necessities of the Society. This was done by the Ministers meeting together and arranging among themselves how the requirements of the churches as to ministry were to be supplied. The notices of arrangement and plan in the proceedings of the early preachers, in the "Swarthmore Papers" we have already quoted, are fully explained by reference to the books of the Society at a later period. In the minutes of the "Morning," or Ministers' "Meeting," we find the following, dated 17th Third Month, 1675: "It is desired that all Friends in and about the city that have a public testimony for God," or ministry, "do meet with the brethren on every First-day and Second-day mornings when they can."

* "The Presbyterian and Independent visible Church in New England and elsewhere brought to the Test." By George Keith, 1689. Edition 1691, p. 174.

† "The Holy Scripture Clearing Itself," &c. By Thomas Pollard.

Otherwise they are "to send a note to the meetings signifying what meetings they intend to be at on First-days." Obviously, the Monday morning meeting dealt with the future arrangements, and the meeting again of the ministers on the Sunday morning, at 8 o'clock, was to complete the plan. They then dispersed; the horses standing in readiness in the yard for those who visited the more distant meetings.* Again, the object is stated, 16th Third Month, 1681. That "at Ellis Hookes, his chamber," by "writing their names, and what meeting they intend to be at next day;" "that as much as may be, those meetings," *i.e.*, "the adjacent meetings near the City," may be equally "supplied so that there may not be several at one meeting and none at another."

If it seemed desirable to establish new meetings, or special meetings for special classes of society, the subject was discussed here.† In 1689, it was ordered positively that *no* Minister should "go to any meeting near the City, without acquainting the Morning Meeting at the Chamber." The whole of these arrangements and the general control of the ministry had, as we have seen, fallen upon Fox, and it is interesting to note that it was needful for him, in Eleventh Month, 1690, to direct "all Friends in all the world that used to write to him," to write to the Morning Meeting. This meeting of Ministers controlled those who

* Fox says in a paper "to the women's meeting."—(See New Swarthmore Collection, Devonshire House)—He was "moved to set up that meeting,"—"to gather up bad books that was scandalous against Friends, and to see that young Friends' books that were sent up to be printed might be stood by," to see that the ministers "might not go in heaps" to one meeting and leave others unprovided for. But "not for them," (*i.e.*, the ministers) "to have authority over the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings."

† In 1681, a special meeting was appointed for "Merchants and Tradesmen who frequented the Exchange."

were not fully recognized as Ministers, or whose ministry was not approved, and their names were *not entered in the book* unless they were so. That this arrangement was a part of Fox's original plans is evident from the extract in Note, page 381, and from a minute, 1st Eleventh Month, 1697, where allusion is made to a paper of his upon the subject, requiring that *many* Ministers should not go to *one* meeting, leaving others ill supplied.

Fox, in his reply to Harwood,* one of the original band of preachers who had attacked his authority, says that "it is known" that the Ministers "do meet together," and that "every one takes his motion;" that he and the rest of the Ministers "know what *order* is" in relation to the control and dispersion of the Ministers.

Harwood states that, "to my knowledge," Fox thus "orders" the preachers:—"Thou must go to such a place," or "such a place is ordered for thee;" and thither they must go, whether they have any command from God or no; and, "in his absence, leaves one of his most eminent servants to order" the rest of those who are "esteemed," or deemed "ministers," or "gives them *a piece of paper*" (probably a memorandum of the engagement to a particular congregation), which he says "the soul of the righteous loathes!" Fox denies "allowing any in his absence," or "sending papers to them."† This gives us a curious glimpse into the relations of Fox to his coadjutors; and although Harwood's testimony, were it uncorroborated, might be received with some reserve, in its main features it is

* "The Spirit of Envy, Lying and Persecution, &c." An answer to a scandalous paper of John Harwood. London, 1663.

† "To all people that profess the eternal Truth of God.—The cause why I have denied G. F., which is the original ground of difference between us.—This is only to go amongst Friends, &c." 1663.

supported by the evidence furnished by the Swarthmore papers.*

In 1700, it was needful to caution women ministers "against taking up so much time in our mixed public meetings." Women were not admitted to this "Second-day morning meeting" in the year 1700, and when they set up a kind of lady-preachers' counterpart to it, the "Morning Meeting" "judged there was no necessity for it;" they might "leave their names," *i.e.*, for insertion in the plan, and if they were careful not to interfere with the "brethren" in "public *mixed meetings*," they might possibly have "an opportunity" of speaking.

The Ministers were requested to "tenderly exhort one another as to anything they might notice in matter or manner." They appear to have discussed the character of their sermons. In 1702, "long, unnecessary preambles," "dialoguing," raising points of objection without clearly and "sufficiently answering them," "affectation in tones, sounds, and gestures," and "seeking popularity," were minuted as objectionable; and "mis-quoting or mis-applying Scripture" was condemned; and Ministers were reminded that they ought to be "conversant" with, and "diligent in reading," Holy Scripture. They were also warned not to "prophesy against any nation, town, city, people, or person."

In Tenth Month, 1702, it would seem as if something similar to the "watchnight service" among the Wesleyans was attempted to be re-established; for in 1653 they are recorded to have "exceedingly affected night meetings," and they were "forbidden by the Justices of the Sessions at

* See T. Holmes to M. Fell, 1653, p. 341; also T. Curtis to G. Fox, 8th Eleventh Month, 1668, p. 341; O. Atherton to M. Fell, 1660, p. 341; Naylor to G. Fox, 1654, p. 343, &c.

Appleby, in January of that year," and it is interesting to note that one of them "pleaded stiffly for the liberty of the subject;" * but it was deemed by the Ministers' Meeting to be undesirable. In 1717, a Monthly Meeting (that of Poole) writes to the Ministers' Meeting for an *explanation* of the parable in Matthew xxii. of the marriage feast, and an explanation was at once sent down for their guidance. The plan or arrangement books, for the "orderly dispersion" of the Ministers for London and the environs, still exist from 1697, with the signatures of those Ministers who engaged to be present. Those also for Bristol and the surrounding meetings still exist. It can be shown from these books, that *the system was so complete*, that two Ministers were thus provided for every meeting.† These books show that, to every one of these meetings, morning and afternoon, Sunday and week days, a smaller number than two Ministers in *prescribed* attendance were seldom present, while every marriage and funeral was attended by *one*. The Minister was accustomed to ride in the coach with the near relatives.‡

A close examination of these books has shown that the system must have extended to the counties, as in one year there were found to be no fewer than 432 visits from Ministers who are not entered more than twice. In a total of 936 meetings held, 2,009 Ministers' attendances are noted, showing the close adherence to the rule of *two* Ministers to each congregation. The only Bristol attendance books preserved

* See "The Irreligion of the Northern Quakers," 1653, p. 12.

† There were then in the city twelve meetings, viz.:—"Bull and Mouth, Devonshire House, Gracechurch Street, Horsley Down, Park, Peel, Ratcliff, Westminster, Savoy, Wheeler Street, Wapping, Long Acre, and in the environs, Croydon, Deptford, Gooses Green, Hammersmith, Plaistow, Tottenham, Wandsworth, Hendon, Mimms, Kingston, Ware."

‡ This is stated on the authority of a private letter.

date from 1728 to 1770. The London books only exist from 1697, to 4th October, 1793. We have seen, however, that the system was in existence in the Society in 1663, and there can be no reasonable doubt that it was commenced at a very early period, and formed part of the original principles of the church arrangement carried out by Fox.

We shall recognise in these Ministers' meetings a source of the vast energy and success which attended the operations of the new Society. We have thus presented to our view a Ministry of "lay" preachers, meeting together and arranging among themselves both the home missionary and the regular church work, apportioning it among themselves in accordance with the various gifts of grace possessed by the officers of this "*working church*." They welcomed any voluntary labourers who, without being Ministers, were generally approved by the church, and considered on trial. The pastoral care of the churches devolved on the "*Elders*;" while a care over the outward deportment and conduct of the members, and other matters not requiring spiritual gifts, devolved upon the "*Overseers or Deacons*." The sacrifices of time, of money, of liberty—to say nothing of life—which were cheerfully made by these *purely voluntary* Gospel labourers—were not by any means small; and we shall not wonder that this earnestness and sincerity met with a commensurate success. These Ministers' meetings tended to animate their zeal; and mutual respect, love, and sympathy lightened their labours. They lived in times when one of the most eminent of their number* said, he *never went to a meeting* without "his nightcap in his pocket," so great was the probability of his having to sleep in a

* G. Whitehead.

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prison. Indeed, even at a later period, when the flame of Christian zeal burned far less brightly, the perfect harmony and brotherly good feeling which prevailed, when none but *working* and *responsible* church officers met together to apportion and to discuss their work, is strongly testified to by an aged minister, who had taken part in these meetings of a “clergy of the laity.”* The records of what passed at these Ministers’ meetings are seldom to be met with. The preservation of the minutes, quoted below, depended entirely upon the circumstance of the ordinary meeting-book being accidentally used for the entry.† The members appear to have transacted their business by putting it into the *form of a question*,‡ a plan which was adopted by John Wesley, and remains to be the method of conducting the business of the Wesleyan Conference, and has been found *to save a vast amount of valuable time*, and to be eminently adapted to the needs of Wesleyan Methodism.§

* See p. 532.

† The churches in the district are termed “The Church and People of God, called by His grace and gathered and knit together by and in His Spirit of Light, Life, and Love, in which we now meet and assemble together to wait upon and worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath freely given unto every one of us a measure of the Holy Ghost, by which we are in measure come unto the true knowledge of the mind and will of God, though we are a poor, unworthy and despised people, scattered among the rocky mountains and dark valleys of the High Peak Country.”—First page of Moneyash Monthly Meeting Book.

‡ “A true relation of the Meeting of Friends in the Ministry, and Overseers and Elders in the Church, the 28th of Tenth Month, 1697. After some time of waiting weightily upon the Lord, &c., these queries were put to the meeting:—1st. “Whether they generally believe and see it needful to have such a meeting as this?”—Answer: “Yea.” 2nd. “If any be dissatisfied with this meeting and have not unity with it, whether you think such should be here?” Answer: “No.” 4th. “Whether any here are unwilling to be searched and their condition spoken to?” Answer: “No.” 5th. “Whether it be not the sense of the meeting that all such as preach or pray should be given up to the will of God in what they speak, neither to add or to diminish from what is given them of God?” Answer: “Yea,” &c.—Chesterfield Quarterly Meeting Book.

§ It may be safely said that two-thirds of the time wasted in the meetings of the present Society would be saved, by resorting to such a method of procedure.

The following minute gives a curious insight into the inner life of the early Society:—“The 5th day of the Eighth Month, 1698.—At our meeting of Friends in the Ministry and Elders, in the meeting-house, at Chesterfield, these things following passed:—First, in our waiting upon the Lord, the Lord appeared very sweetly and powerfully amongst us, and in us, to our great comfort. Praises to his Name for ever. Secondly, we had a precious time in prayer and supplication to the Lord, in a sweet stream and current of Life Eternal. Thirdly, after prayer, we—every one that had a part in the ministry*—declared *how* it had been with us, as to our faithfulness therein, and *where* we had found by experience that the enemy had hurt us, or overtaken us unawares at times. Fourthly, the snares, baits, gins, traps, nets, &c. of the enemy were spoken of, and laid to plain view; and caution, counsel, and advice in the love of God given freely from him amongst us.”

It will be recollect that a question of the utmost importance to the Christian Church was raised by the Independents in the Assembly of Divines, viz., that an Elder or Bishop—*i.e.*, a Minister—could only really be an Elder, in *the church that acknowledged him to be an Elder*. This was an argument against Provincial Synods, and the machinery of the Presbyterian Church; and as the pro-

* It must be remembered, as shown in the minute of appointment, 29th Tenth Month, 1697, that Overseers were appointed to be present. We have before mentioned that these officers were not necessarily, although often ministers.

It may be remarked that in a prior minute, the Ministers, Overseers, and Elders are described as “All Friends that have a public testimony to bear in our solemn assemblies, and the Overseers of the several meetings.” The word Minister generally meaning Travelling Ministers, Elder being a general term.

It appears that the Elders, or Ministers appointed by the Churches to the pastoral office, exercised a control over both Travelling Ministers, and others whose ministry was not wholly approved by the congregation, in *the intervals* between the ministers' meetings.

posed Presbyterian Ministers were all to be ministers to particular congregations, we must admit the force of the Independent argument; but, in the rise of the Early Friends, the Travelling Ministers were, in the first place, acknowledged by an association of neighbouring churches, and held a certificate of fitness from them ; and eventually, from the very extensive character of the ministerial services of many of these men, they gradually became acknowledged to have the position of “Elders” by *the whole of the associations of churches* in England. This will help us to understand how Fox was led to establish, first, “general meetings” or associations of churches, which were held (eventually) every quarter; how he then subdivided these associated churches into smaller and more convenient numbers, to meet together in what were termed “monthly meetings,” (consisting of a group of 3 to 5 meetings) which again sent delegates to a larger association, called a “Quarterly Meeting.” “The Circular “Yearly Meeting” was a very ancient meeting, existing prior to the establishment of the central Yearly Meeting in London. Large wooden “booths” were erected, and these meetings were continued after the establishment of the latter meeting, as a means of spreading the Gospel. In the case of *Bristol* Yearly Meeting, it was needful, at a later date, to expressly provide that, if continued, it was to have no legislative power.

In 1656, the new Society had commenced to emerge from its condition of isolated, independent churches, and a “general meeting” out of several counties was established. As early, however, as 1653, we have distinct evidence that these isolated churches chose “one or two” “to take the charge of the flock of God in that place.”* They had

* In a valuable record respecting the establishment of Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings, G. Fox speaks of the Elders of particular places meeting at

distinct duties. They were first "to see that order be kept in the church." They were to see that "the First-day (Sunday) meeting" was regularly held, and a meeting on "one or two nights in the week." They were to see that the flock "meet together to wait on the Lord." "Three or four hours" are mentioned; whether this was the length of each meeting, or the two week-night meetings, does not appear. They were to "lay the charge and care on some Friends, the most grown in Truth," to see that every opportunity for Friends to meet was availed of." Once in every "two or three weeks" they were in addition to have a public or "general meeting with other friends near you." They were to deal with delinquents by giving them "Gospel order," &c.* In 1653, at Bishoprick (or Durham) it was

Swarthmore about 1653. See "Letters of Early Friends," p. 312. It is unquestionable that the principle on which Fox proceeded was to establish Elders in every church. These were, probably, in the first instance appointed by the Travelling Minister. Fox says in the very important document quoted: "So you may see that there was *not a church* but had their Elders." And the necessity of Deacons is also dwelt upon.—"Letters of Early Friends," p. 317.

* "W. Dewsbury's Letter" countersigned by G. F.—"Swarthmore Papers." Dated 1653. A very ancient document exists in the papers belonging to Bristol Meeting—without date—entitled, "Rules concerning the Church," commencing:—"The elders and brethren sent unto the brethren in the north these necessary things," &c. It orders that "the particular meetings by all the Children of Light be kept and observed every First-day of the week," and that "general meetings" be held "on some other day of the week." That care should be taken that meetings should be established at once "for as many as are brought unto the Truth." In the 13th article it expressly provides respecting "the Children of the Light," that if any be called to serve "the Commonwealth" "in any public service which is for the public health and good, that with carefulness it be taken, and in faithfulness discharged unto God." It speaks of "members" and "children of members," and that "records" of the "birth of children" and "the burial of the dead" be kept. In the 19th article, it provides "that elders made by the Holy Ghost, feed the flock of God, taking the oversight hereof not of constraint, but of a ready mind, neither as lord's over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock of Christ." It ends, "from the Spirit of Truth to all the Children of Light, in the light who walk;"—"that all, in order be kept, in obedience to

found "convenient that some of every meeting" should "meet together every first Seventh-day of *every month*," and declare what necessities or wants are seen in their several meetings," and as "necessity is seen, so to minister."* Collections were then ordered, and the practice of *weekly collections* appears to have existed in the northern meetings in 1653.† Prior to 1697, a collection was made in the public meeting‡ on "First-day" mornings, but if any of the general public contributed it was *returned to them*,§ because they never received *any support from "the world."* If, on the other hand, it was for a *public object*, such as general distress, or for suffering Protestant Christians, they then received the contributions of "the world."

In 1656, a paper was addressed "From the North to

God," &c., with an epistle, "Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, &c." The date of this is probably between 1653 and 1656. Printed in "Letters of Early Friends," from another source, supposed to be a paper of the General or Yearly Meeting, held in Bedfordshire, 1657.

* Letter from Anthony Pearson and fifteen others.—"Swarthmore Papers." Fox states (see Journal) that in 1653 some of these associated Monthly Meetings were established. Dorking Monthly Meeting Book states that John Hugh and Thomas Lawson, both of the north country, had their first meeting in Surrey in 1654 or 1655, and about that time a Monthly Meeting was "settled;" it is however important to notice, that "Monthly Meetings for Worship" are mentioned, and that it is doubtful whether the term implies in this case the establishment of a Monthly Meeting for business. This is a striking instance of their Christian consistency.

† "Brief Narrative of the Irreligion of the Northern Quakers," p. 16. London, 1653.

‡ "A box with a hole in the top" was made use of in Kingston Meeting. Beck & Ball's "London Meetings," p. 317. A similar box was used at Devonshire House, and is still in existence there.

§ A number of instances of this occur in the Irish Meetings—*e.g.*, Dublin Men's Meeting, 1696: "Aristarchus Franham having *laid down* 3d. at the last collection, he not being at *unity* with Friends, having formerly taken a wife from amongst the world, and he making *laced* shoes, &c., it is desired that Abell Strettel and Joseph Hank return him his money." In 1697 the collection was transferred to the business meetings, because the general public *would* "lay down" their money—Christians alone, *i.e.*, Church members, were to contribute to the support of the church.

the South," from Skipton General Meeting in Yorkshire. They allude to "a former paper," which was "not owned by all in the South," relating to the "great service" they find in these "General Meetings." Probably the tendency to *Independency* induced some of the newly established churches to withdraw from these associations of churches, and the North now declares to the South, that "if all parts and countries were drawn into the *same way of union* it would be of great use to the body." They also notify that they have "settled a way for collections among ourselves, and for other outward things, that all may be preserved in peace and order." But it is most delicately introduced to their notice, and they say they are "not free to lay anything before them but our own example."

In 1658, therefore, we find the Southern Counties responded to the advice tendered. A General Meeting was held at John Crook's house at Luton, in Bedfordshire, and it lasted three days. It was attended by Friends "from most parts of the nation, and many thousands of persons were at it." These "General Meetings" appear to have combined four objects: the preaching of the Gospel, something on the principle of a Methodist camp-meeting, the administration of the internal affairs of the Society, the meeting of the Ministers from all parts, giving an account of their successes, and probably planning fresh aggressive movements, and the collection of monies for home and foreign mission purposes. They also had to satisfy the churches that *work* had been done for the money contributed. In 1654, it was reported to the Protector, that at a General Meeting at Swanington, there were six persons writing for publication. Giles Calvert, their publisher, stayed with them eight or nine days, returning with the

MSS. to be put in print.* At Scalehouse an appeal on behalf of foreign missions was responded to, to the extent of £443 3s. 5d., and the expenditure reached the figure of £490 13s. 5d., which, considering the difference in value, was a considerable sum of money, for expenses incurred in New England, Holland, France and Jersey, Turkey, Barbadoes, Virginia, Jamaica. In Cambridgeshire another was held for the Eastern Counties; at Horsham for the four counties, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and Hants; at Chippenham, for Wiltshire and the adjacent parts. At Horsham a subscription was raised similar to the one recommended at Scalehouse, but this was for the travelling Ministers, and generally for home mission work. A Yearly Meeting was held in 1660 at Balby, in Yorkshire, and again thousands of people attended. In the same year a special Yearly Meeting took place, which appears to have in some way centralised the movement and tended towards a complete connectional system, as the "Elders were ordered from all parts;" and Fox tells us it "was removed to London the next year," where it was "kept ever since as a more convenient place."

But much remained to be done to consolidate the fabric of the new Society. Persecution of the most fearful kind overtook all the Separatist, or Free Churches, and there can hardly be a doubt that the disorganization resulting from troubles both without and within, caused Fox to make another and special effort. Fox was imprisoned in Lancaster and Scarborough Castles in 1664, on the ground of plotting against the Government, but ostensibly for refusing to swear, and he was released by order of the King, in 1666, who had been informed that Fox "was a man against plotting and fighting." From 1666 to 1668 Fox

* See "Thurloe's State Papers," pp. 94 and 116.

visited all the Churches in England, to organize and establish "Monthly Meetings,"* and to place them in an orderly relation to the "Quarterly Meetings" (*i.e.*, the General Meetings of an Association of Churches) which had been before established, and also to allay by his personal presence the rising tide of opposition to some of his plans of church government. It was his desire, by well considered arrangements, to give to particular churches power to deal with offenders against the good order of the churches, as well as with those who might be guilty of conduct inconsistent with Christian morality. These matters required immediate attention, as they threatened the existence and the credit of the new Society.

The fire of London happened in 1666, and from this year persecution gradually slackened, and was at a stand in 1668. It has been represented by Baxter, that Penn had some considerable part in giving to the "Quakers" a regular government, but it will be observed that it was in this year that Penn became an adherent of the new Society. Fox was, however, the organizing and directing agent, who by his unwearied labours reduced the seemingly incongruous materials of this great religious movement into order, and sought, while endeavouring to secure the most abundant development of the gifts of all the members of the Church, to curb the extravagance which had destroyed many of the little congregations of Separatists and brought discredit on the Christian religion. The church system of the new Society now only needed a central conference. The "Monthly Meeting" sent its representatives to the "Quarterly Meeting," and again the "Quarterly Meetings" (already

* The *Monthly Meeting* consisted of an association of two, three, or four churches only.

linked to the local Yearly Meetings) were to send representatives to the central "Yearly Meeting" in London.* All the business of the Yearly Meeting came from the Quarterly Meetings,† except upon "necessity or urgent occasions," which fell out "after the Quarterly Meetings."

The only representatives that were to be sent up were "substantial Elders" (*i.e.*, Ministers) "that know the affairs of the Church of Christ in their country."‡ Fox states in this important document, that the sole officers of the Society were "Apostles," "Elders," or "Deacons,"§ and that there "was not a Church but they had their Elders" in Apostolic times, and clearly implies that in the Society of Friends it was so intended. He appears to vindicate also the power of the Apostolic or Travelling Ministry to "ordain Elders in every city," and that the Yearly Meeting should consist of the "Apostles" and "Elders," after the precedent of the early Christian Church. Besides the representatives from each Quarterly Meeting, every Travelling Minister holding a certificate was by his office a member of the Yearly Meeting. There is reason to believe that the expenses of all the representatives were paid. On one occasion Fox urges Barclay to come to London to the Yearly Meeting, and states incidentally that his expenses would be paid. The clerks of the Monthly Meetings were often, if not universally, paid for their services.

The 6th of the Eleventh Month, 1668, appears to have

* In the year 1689, Fox states there were 26 Yearly Meetings at home and abroad with which the London Yearly Meeting corresponded.

† Page 315 of "Explanatory Document," by G. Fox. Date 1689.

‡ In 1703, the rule was that none were to be admitted but "Deputies, public Friends, and Correspondents."

§ See also paper by R. Barrow, in "Aberdeen Monthly Meeting Minute Book," p. 169 $\frac{1}{2}$. "Knowing that as he ordained Elders, Deacons, and Nursing Mothers, in ages by past, even so hath the Lord our God brought to pass in our days."

been the date on which the first London Yearly Meeting was held.* The establishment of this central Meeting gave strength to the new Society, and excited some attention in the outside world. The paper then issued by Fox was twice reprinted under the title of "The Canons and Institutions" of George Fox. The importance of this document in the history of the organization of the Society, has hitherto been overlooked.† It has been found at the commencement of the records of every Quarterly Meeting in the Society, which have been hitherto inspected by the writer, bearing date 1669. The contents of this document are very simple:—

1st. Those "who walk not in the truth" and so "dishonour God," are to be exhorted by persons appointed by the Church, who are to report. 2nd. Members who, contrary to their profession, "follow pleasure, drunkenness, gaming, or are not faithful in their calling or dealings, not honest or just, but runneth into debt," "to be exhorted, and report made." 3rd. Those who contract marriage in a disorderly manner, "contrary to the practice of the holy men of God." Marriages to be recorded in a book, and at least a dozen witnesses to be present. 4th. All widows who marry a second time, are to secure to the children

* See "Sewel," edition 1831, vol. ii. p. 180; also a "History of the Doctrine and Discipline of Friends, written by desire of the Meeting for Sufferings" in London, 1804, p. 22.—MS. Minutes of the Yearly Meeting, Devonshire House.

† First edition in 8vo, entitled "Canons and Institutions, drawn up and agreed upon by the General Assembly or Meeting of the Heads of the Quakers, &c., George Fox being their President." London, 1669. With a preface consisting of a scurilous attack on Fox, and the alteration of one word of the original document which will for ever disgrace the author of the pamphlet. This was answered by Stephen Crisp, in his "Innocent Assemblies of the People called Quakers;" also a 4to edition, bound with an account of the discipline of the Church of Mr. Richard Davis, of Rothwell, the object being to warn the Church of England of the close organization of the Dissenters. It is reprinted in Beck and Balls' "London Meetings," but the writer pointed out its importance in sixteen or seventeen lectures, given some years ago to the Society of Friends in many places, long prior to this publication.

of the first marriage a just and equal portion of their property, even in case of no will having been made by the first husband; if there is a will, then the legacies under it are to be secured before a second marriage, and the arrangements recorded in a book. 5th. Widows to be especially cared for by the Church, and generally eased, and children apprenticed. All things to be "done according to truth and righteousness." 6th. That since "from Genesis to Revelations you never read of any priest that married people," all who go to "the priests of Baal, who have had their hands in the blood of our brethren, who were the cause of their banishment, the spoiling of their goods, and casting into prison, and who kept them in prison to this day," are to have "gospel order" before they are "left as heathens;" they are to be visited three or four times, and unless they condemn their conduct they must be repudiated as members. 7th. Those who "wear their hats when Friends pray," and are gotten into the principle of the Ranters, are to have judgment passed against them, and to be "cut off by the sword of the Spirit of the Lord." 8th. That all the meetings in which there are a large number of poor, are to be liberally assisted, and that the churches "may bear each other's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." Nothing is to be "lacking" in the church in this matter, because "now amongst Christians there is not to be a beggar, according to the laws of Jesus." 9th. Any kind of courtship which does not sincerely intend marriage, either men or women who "draw out the affections of one another, and after awhile leave one another," is denounced. 10th. All evil speakers, backbiters, and slanderers, foolish talkers and idle jesters, are to be dealt with, because "the saints' words" are to "minister grace to the hearers." 11th. Tale-bearers are to be "reproved

and admonished," because "such do not bring people into unity of the Spirit." 12th. Cheats and people who borrow money on false pretences—and two apparently difficult cases, "a woman tall in her person, and freckled in the face, and one John Harding"—cause the meek spirit of Fox, in passing, to descend to particulars, and to call upon the churches to condemn them. 13th. General meetings to be now held once a quarter, and differences to be speedily ended. 14th. Children to be "trained up in the fear of the Lord, in soberness and holiness, righteousness, temperance, meekness and gentleness, and lowliness, and modesty in apparel and carriage. See to exhort your children and family, especially while young." There is not, however, a word respecting treating children as members. 15th. To provide books for registering births, marriages, and burials, "as the holy men of God did of old."* 17th. Provides that "nothing of the memorial of the blood and cruel sufferings of your brethren be lost which may stand as a testimony against the murdering spirits of the world, and be to the praise of the Lord's everlasting power in the ages to come;

* These registers are all lodged in Somerset House, and some of the earliest date from 1652, and therefore may be said to have been instituted as soon as each church was formed. The earliest dates are probably back entries, and in perhaps a few instances the registers of Separatist churches which went over bodily to the new Society. It has been contended by J. S. Rowntree, in the 4th Month number of the "Friends' Quarterly Examiner," of 1872—that the existence of these register books shows that the early Friends considered *children* as members. This theory is completely refuted by an inspection of the books in question. In a large number of churches there are entries of persons born, married, and buried, prior to the rise of the Society. The earliest date of birth is in Cornwall Quarterly Meeting in 1609, while at Thirsk a burial is registered for the year 1610, and at Heminghane a marriage is registered for 1639! If the argument were tenable, since the Baptist churches from the earliest times kept similar registers, it would prove equally that they considered infants as members, although it is well known that there never was a Baptist church which admitted infants as members. See a pamphlet published in 1873, by the author in reply "On Membership in the Society of Friends." S. Harris & Co., London.

who supported and upheld his in such hardships and cruelty; who is God over all, blessed for ever, Amen.”* 18th. Such as pay tythes are to be exhorted, since they “make void the testimony and suffering of all our brethren who have suffered many of them to death, by which widows and fatherless have been made, which is contrary to the doctrine of the Apostles, and the doctrine of the Martyrs, and contrary to the doctrine of the righteous of the present age.” 19th. Prisoners (for conscience sake) to be relieved, their wives and families supported by the church.

It must not be supposed that these duties had not been performed by the Churches already established, but it was needful, as the new organization was now completed, to define clearly the business of these Meetings. Then, as if to prevent the possibility of the great duty of the Church of Christ, the propagation of the Gospel, being overlooked in providing for the good order of the Churches, Fox adds this pregnant epistle, which reads like a satire upon the action of this Church at a later period, when its business seemed mainly to be the upholding of a rigid discipline, not so much for the interests of the cause of Christ, but for its own credit, and when it retired from the position of a Society for the propagation of the Gospel:—“Dear Friends, be faithful in the service of God and mind the Lord’s business. Be diligent and bring the power of the Lord over all that have gainsaid it. And all you that be faithful go to visit (them) all that have been convinced, from house to house, that if it be possible you may not leave an hoof in Egypt. And so *every one go seek the lost sheep and bring him home on your back to the fold*, and there will be more joy of

* These accounts of sufferings are preserved in grim and ponderous folios among the records of the Society, where they stand as if ready for the Judgment Day, containing a fearful record of the cruelty inflicted by professing Christians!

that one sheep, than of the ninety and nine in the fold!" A postscript orders meetings to be held, "in the name of Jesus Christ," between 10 and 11 in the morning, because the "priests'" worship had commenced, and a caution lest perchance those who meet to have "fellowship in the Spirit" should be seen "nodding" or "sleeping" in Meetings!" This seems to show that, even at this early period, there was a tendency unduly to prolong the period of silent prayer.

In the time of the Commonwealth it would seem that the public meetings of the Society were conducted almost entirely on the model of the Baptist and Independent Meetings, and that certain meetings of the Church, corresponding with what would be now called "prayer meetings," were occasionally held with a large amount of silent prayer. We have already shown that the practice of "silent meetings," in the large and flourishing Church at Bristol, appears to have been introduced as something new in 1678, and that "the pure sylence of all flesh" then only applied to "Friends" who "found freedom," and who withdrew after the regular meeting for worship.

The question as to the amount of silent prayer in the early Friends' Meetings, has been debated in later times in the Society, very much in accordance with the prepossession of the persons discussing it. Fox undoubtedly recommended the newly formed churches, when there was as yet no settled minister, to meet regularly in silent prayer; but his anxiety to provide regular ministry is evident from the earliest times, and that this anxiety increased with age and experience is unquestionable. Keith states* that in the beginning, when "divers were convinced and gathered together in divers

* "On the Benefit, Advantage and Glory, of Silent Meetings," London, 1670, p. 8.

places, through *very necessity* their meetings came to be silent for some time," as there were few "fitted and qualified" to minister to others. The practice of silent worship was largely developed under the fearful persecution of Charles the Second's reign, when nearly the whole of the Ministers of a district were occasionally in prison, and the law not reaching a meeting held in silence, the advantages of this method of worship were pressed upon the Society, and several works were written by eminent Ministers, in its favour.* Barclay states "that of the many meetings" of the Society "there is scarce any in which God raiseth not up some or other to minister," &c.,† and that in his time there were scarcely any meetings without ministry. Baxter, while bearing testimony to the "constancy and sufferings of the Quakers, who persisted in holding their meetings till they were all lodged in jail," mentions with his usual acuteness this new feature in their meetings. He says (about 1664) : "And the poor deluded souls would sometimes meet only to sit still in silence (when, as they said, the Spirit did not speak), and it was a question whether this silence was a religious exercise not allowed by the Liturgy,"‡—and we find that juries acquitted them although grievously threatened. We shall again allude to the inroads which Quietism was commencing to make upon the earnest evangelistic spirit of the early Friends. We may remark that during this period the public and

* Barclay, in his *Apology*, advocates it on the ground that "it can neither be stopped by the malice of men or devils," and generally he appears to represent in his arguments the increasing tendency to commend the practice at this period.

† Page 225, Irwin's Edition, Manchester.

Keith also, in the work above quoted (p. 9), and written at this period, says: "That the Friends *then* came to find the advantage 'in a wonderful manner.'"

In 1671, a pamphlet was published, "Silent Meetings a Wonder to the World," which may be taken to imply something in some way new, or it would not be a "wonder."

‡ "Sylvester's Life," p. 436.

private meetings for worship of the Society were made absolutely coincident, as they scorned even the semblance of "flying from persecution," as worthy upholders of the distinctive principle of Helwys, to which we have before alluded.

A curious document found in the records at Devonshire House, will convince the reader of the correctness of our statement, that silence to any large extent was the exception, and not the rule, in the ordinary public meetings. This is a register of the number of sermons and prayers in Wheeler Street Meeting-house for rather over a year, from 8th of Eleventh Month, 1684, to 28th of Twelfth Month, 1685. During this time the meetings were frequently broken up by soldiery, and yet there was an average of two sermons and one prayer to every meeting during that period.* Towards the end of Fox's life it may be doubted whether he did not contemplate introducing a large Bible in the gallery for the use of the Ministers. In the Meeting-house at Swarthmore, which Fox built, and of which he made a present to the Society, a large Bible was placed, chained to the gallery where the Ministers preached, as exemplified in the plate of the worship of the old Flemish Mennonites at the commencement of this volume. That Fox himself and the Ministers of the early Society had no hesitation in preaching Bible in hand, and quoting out of the Scriptures from their Bibles, has been observed. And from the earlier portion of this history it will be evident that there was no intentional "banishment"

* Out of 53 First-day Meetings only one was silent, and in two, prayer only was offered. In the remaining 50 meetings, 84 addresses delivered by men, and 16 only by women Ministers, three of the latter were "*not owned*;" 32 prayers *were offered by men*. Out of 53 Week-day Meetings, eight were silent, six, no statement, one, several spoke. In the remaining 38 meetings, 48 addresses by men, 18 by women Ministers, 18 prayers offered by men, one by a woman.

of the Holy Scriptures from their meetings. This is remarked as late as 1703,* and in proof it is stated that Fox had given a folio Bible to a Meeting-house in London, and that it could be seen if wished. It will be obvious that this was a most unfair reply, unless Fox had actually given it for occasional use in the Meeting-house, in some way to be used in their meetings. The position of the Society of Friends in this matter was well understood by the Independents and Baptists.† It was undoubtedly the result of the intense reaction in 1640 from the enforced use of the Liturgy of the Church of England.

The views of John Smyth, of Amsterdam, on this subject, have been already alluded to (pp. 106 and 107), and among the General Baptists it is obvious that the reading of the Holy Scriptures was frequently omitted in some churches up to as late a period as 1747 (singing being omitted to a later period). This is remarked upon by the learned Whiston,‡ and Killingworth replies admitting that “the reading of the Scriptures is omitted in some of our assemblies.”

The constant and uniform recommendation and enquiries as to the private perusal of the Holy Scriptures in the Society of Friends, mitigated the obvious disadvantages

* “*Vindiciæ Veritatis.*” London, 1703. By D. Phillips, M.D., in reply to John Stillingfleet. Preface by Whitehead, and postscript by Claridge. Page 203 to 206. “Reading is not necessary to the spiritual worship of Christ. We do not, in the time of worship, encourage it in any way, much less command it. *Should we give order for the reading of any book in our meetings, it would be for the reading of the Holy Scriptures.*” Also “*Seasonable Advice about Quakerism,*” by John Stillingfleet.

† And to the best of our knowledge, no attack on the Society was ever made in early times by an Independent or Baptist, for the practice of the exclusion of the Bible from their worship.

‡ *Friendly Address to the (General) Baptists, 1747.*—He attended the General Baptist Meeting at Moreot.

which accrued from the omission of its systematic reading.* Yet there can hardly be a doubt that the effects of this omission had a disastrous effect upon all the Dissenting Churches, particularly upon the General Baptist congregations and the Society of Friends.†

In the rejection by the Dissenting Churches of this provision of the Reformers in the English liturgy, for the systematic reading of the Holy Scriptures, may be seen one of the lamentable results of the *enforcement* by the strong arm of the law, even of a most important and salutary practice, and one which has greatly tended to diffuse the knowledge of the Scriptures among the common people in England.

In the year 1670, the holding of the Yearly Meeting was prevented by the persecution incident to the Conventicle Act. Ratcliff and Horslydown meeting-houses were pulled down by soldiers. At Ratcliff the church met on the ruins the next Sunday. In 1672, it is noted in the Minute Book, that there is to be a General Meeting of Friends held in London once a year, in the week called Whitsun week, to consist of six representatives for the City of London, three for the City of Bristol, two for the town of Colchester, and one or two for each and every of the counties of England

* In 1717, Bristol reports that, in the School under the care of the men's Meeting, "the Holy Scriptures are in a solemn manner read *every day*."—MS. Minutes of the Yearly Meeting.

† In spite of the "Apologetical Narrative" of the Assembly Independents, the statement on Independency, published in 1643, page 8, that the worship of the Independents included "the reading of the Scriptures and exposition of them as occasion was," it may be questioned whether (unless we except the fragmentary reading of the chapter coming under comment in the sermon) the whole body of Dissenters in England, (excepting those only who participated with the Presbyterians in the State worship), did not omit the excellent practice of the early Christian Church viz., the *consecutive* public reading of the New Testament—a practice to which we probably owe the transmission of the text of the New Testament Scriptures, with so great a degree of certainty, to our own times.

and Wales respectively ;” and that all other persons (except travelling Ministers, who were *ex officio* members), than those who are “ so nominated, appointed and chosen,” be desired to forbear to come to the said meeting, except such as *they when met together* shall see meet to admit. “ The public labourers ” (*i.e.* travelling ministers) are “ ordered to be here in the same week.”* This shows that there was a simultaneous gathering of the ministers in a separate meeting. In 1678, the “ travelling brethren in another meeting ” added a postscript to the epistle issued. In 1688, a discussion arose in the assembly about choosing “ parliament men and accepting offices as justices of peace,” and it is interesting to notice that Fox strenuously opposed any consideration of *political matters* in this meeting (contrary to the opinion of Penn and others), and stated that “ it was not in the wisdom of God to propound such things here. *Serve all men in the truth and righteousness;* ” and gave his opinion that those who were concerned in such matters could “ discourse among themselves concerning such things,” without bringing them into the church.

The great wisdom of such advice is obvious, for if the State had no right to meddle with religion or spiritual matters, the churches had no right to use their religious organization to interfere with the civil government or discuss purely secular matters. As individuals, or in their capacity as citizens, they had a perfect right to do so, but churches only decrease their means of spiritual usefulness by associating the benefits they confer with the spirit of political parties. The only object of the organization which Fox established was, in his mind, the propagation of the gospel and the orderly internal government of the churches. The

* Minute Book, 1672.

system worked well as long as it had for its sole object the promotion of the gospel, and while the members were strictly limited to those who gave evidence of conversion, and while their officers were those exclusively who gave their earnest personal labour to that great end. One of the most important objects aimed at was to have a popular method of the ejection of a member from the Christian society, when he or she had brought the profession of Christianity into disgrace. In the early Society the case first occupied the attention of the ministers, who tenderly laboured with the offender to bring him to repentance. If he was unwilling to hear the Church, he was then judged by his peers. The greatest care was taken, that if he were willing to confess and condemn his conduct as *publicly as the offence was known*, he should be received back into Christian communion, but if he considered that he had not been treated impartially, he had the power of appealing from the Monthly to the Quarterly, and from the Quarterly to the Yearly Meeting. We may remark that in no single particular has the organization of the Society of Friends worked better. The process of ejection is less summary than in the Methodist societies, but is less liable to abuse.

The wisdom with which the question of marriage was grappled with by Fox, from the earliest period, avoided the charge, which was falsely made against the English Baptists, of disregarding the sanctity of marriage, because they, as well as the Friends, solemnized their marriages among themselves, and neglected to be married by the clergy of the State Church, and were equally cut off from the advantage of the parochial registers. It was common among the Baptist congregations, who also objected to be married by "a priest," to keep registers of marriages as well as births and burials.

In 1653, Fox informs us, in an interesting paper* on the subject, several Friends came to him concerning marriages, "to know what they should do in that case," and he advised that all marriages should be laid before "faithful Friends" in their church capacity. The clearness of the persons proposing to be married, from all other engagements was investigated, the consent of parents obtained. It was then to be left to them to "declare it, in the end of a meeting, and to the justices, and at the market cross." If there was any difficulty raised in the particular congregation against the marriage, "they might stay till the general county meeting, and when all things were clear, that they might appoint a meeting" for solemnizing the marriage. Twelve Friends were to be appointed witnesses, and as many more as they pleased, and "their relations of the world might come to it." There appears to have been some difficulty in maintaining complete order. Sometimes "the loose ones of the world would stand up and take themselves in marriage in Friends' meetings," and "certificates" and "registers" were not kept, in spite of Fox's care, "in many places." Fox then laid down more stringent rules for the churches, and after 1668 the marriage was laid before both the men's and women's meetings, the Monthly and the Quarterly Meetings, and if they came out of different counties, "certificates of clearness were to be produced. In 1653 the parliament (called in derision Barebones' parliament) ordered that after the 29th September, all persons who shall agree to be married within the Commonwealth of England shall deliver in their names and places of abode, with the names of their parents, guardians and overseers, to the registrar of the parish where each party lives," who was to see that the

* Swarthmore Collection, vol. V. Devonshire House. "G. Fox's paper, 28-2-1676."

banns were published in the church, “or else in the market-place, three several weeks successively before the hours of 11 and 12 o’clock on a market day, if the party desire it.” The registrar then made out a certificate “of the due performance of the one or the other.” The parties are then to come before some justice of the peace of the district, &c., with this certificate. The man then says:—“I, A. B., do here, in the presence of God and before these witnesses, promise to be to thee a loving and faithful husband,” and the woman the same. The Protector’s parliament confirmed the Act in the year 1656. During this period it was customary for the bride and bridegroom to be twice married, once by the Magistrate, and once by the Minister.

Fox held a strong view of the religious character of marriage:—“We marry none but are *witnesses* of it.” Marriage “is God’s joining, not man’s.” It is interesting to notice that the form of words *now* used by the Society of Friends, is *that prescribed by the Directory* with very slight variation, viz.:—The man took the woman by the “right hand,” saying these words, “I, M., do take thee N., to be my married wife, and do in the presence of God and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful husband unto thee, until God shall separate us by death”—and the wife the same. The Society of Friends being the only Church which has handed down the simple form of the Puritans in the marriage ceremony to modern times. We annex the ancient form of certificate below.* To such an extent did the care respecting mar-

* Form of Marriage Certificate.—“Know all people, that A. B., of C., in the county of D., and L. M., of G., in the county of W., having in several Monthly Meetings of the Lord’s people, published their intention to join together in marriage, and having obtained the assent and consent of friends and relations, being found clear

riages, once so wise and needful, prevail in the Society when it was no longer needful, that prior to 1790, the man had to attend 12 *distinct meetings* for discipline, to repeat in public his intention of marriage, and the intentions were *announced 20 times* prior to the solemnization of the marriage.* Such were some of the features of the rise of the early Society of Friends. We shall now see this experiment in Church Government enter upon another stage of its development, and it will form a new, and hitherto unwritten, chapter in its history.

from all other persons, upon the day of month, in the year , at the dwelling-house of , in an assembly of the Lord's people, they were joined together in marriage according to the law of God and example of His ancient people; for the said A. B., in the presence of the Lord and His people, took her the said L. M. to be his married wife, and she, the said L. M., in like manner took him to be her husband, and of them did, and do hereby engage, to be faithful each to other in that near relation of marriage during both their lives, of which we are witnesses." Here the witnesses sign.
From Monthly Meeting Book, Edinburgh, 1671.

* Rathbone's Narrative, p. 112.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVI.

PETITION FROM "FRIENDS" TO THE COUNCIL OF THE LORD PROTECTOR, 1658.*

(Hitherto unpublished as a whole; for small portion see "Dr. Waddington's History.")

"TO THE PROTECTOR AND HIS COUNCIL.

"**FRIENDS**—It may seem strange unto you, as it doth unto others, to hear that so many of our Friends should be cast into prison, there being few gaols or houses of correction in England to which some of them have not been committed, and you partly know how many of them are this day in bonds, and it is no less strange that such frequent and heavy sufferings for matters of conscience, should come upon us and our brethren, who, for the most part have been instrumental with you and others for casting off that yoke of oppression which, at the beginning of the late wars, lay upon the honest people of the land, which made many fly into strange nations, and to seek habitations in the deserts. But we wonder the more that they should come from those we counted our friends, that so much have pretended the liberty of conscience, and many of themselves practised the same things for which we now suffer.

"May we not ask, What has been done by our Friends? What laws are those which they have broken? Whose persons or possessions have they wronged? What force or violence to any man have they used? Have you found them in plots, or guilty of sedition, or making resistance against authority? have they not patiently borne the greatest sufferings that any people of this nation ever lay under since Queen Mary's days, without murmuring or discontent? and when have they sought to revenge themselves, or troubled you or others, to be repaired for those many injuries and false imprisonments which they have endured; how have they been counted as sheep for the slaughter, persecuted and despised, beaten, stoned, wounded, stocked, whipped, haled out of the synagogues, and cast in dungeons and noisome vaults, where many of them have died in bonds, shut up from their friends, denied needful sustenance for several days together, not suffered to have pen, ink, or paper, and when they have laid there many months, and some of them years, denied a legal trial, continued from sessions to assizes, and from one assize to another, and no equity to be found from judge or justice.

* Reference in the Public Record Office—"Domestic Interregnum"—Letters and Papers, 1658, pp. 480, 481.

"If it be answered to us, they are common disturbers of ministers, they will not pay tithes, they will not swear, they will not put off their hats, they travel up and down from one county to another without a magistrate's pass, and on the First-days to meetings at great distances; they will not pay fees when brought into courts, nor plead in the forms there used, nor give security to keep the peace, or to be of their good behaviour, when the justices of the peace require it, and we have laws and customs that require these things should be done.

"Is it forgotten what was one of the great causes of the late wars, the sufferings that then were imposed and lay upon many for matters of conscience; and was is not a chief pretence of our fighting that we might enjoy the freedom of conscience, as well as outward rights, not only in the inner man, for that the bishops or High Commission Court could not hinder, but the free exercise in all acts of piety and religion of what the Lord should make manifest to us. But whether this was then intended, or is now perverted, it is that which is our right which we must claim, and no man may take from us. For this we know that Christ Jesus alone hath right to rule over the consciences of men, unto whom every one must give an account of himself according to the just, perfect, and unchangeable law of God, which is revealed with that alone of God, which is made manifest in man, which he hath showed unto him, by which everyone shall be judged at the last day, when the book of consciences shall be opened; and therefore all unequal, imperfect, and changeable laws of men we do deny, and by them, or for their transgression, we shall not be judged of the Lord; and all laws made in their wills, by their wisdoms, in the things of God which concern religion and the free exercise of a good conscience towards God and man, against them all we do bear witness, and knowing the commandments of the Lord, and what he requires of us, and having tasted his tender love to those that keep them, and felt his terrors against all disobedience, we are made willing to bear the greatest sufferings, rather than sin against God. And in this ground we stand, not careful what man can do unto us, or says of us, nor to give him an answer in this matter, for whether it is better to obey God or man, let him judge.

"Yet here, to prevent mistake, we do, with the like clearness, declare our free and willing subjection in the things of this world to every ordinance of man that is just according to the righteous law of God; and our work is not to weaken, but to strengthen the hand of the magistrate, by labouring to bring all to own that of God which should exercise their consciences to do in all things as they would be done unto, in which is fulfilled the law and the prophets; which takes away the occasion itself of the law, and brings to live in peace and love wherein should be the magistrates' joy and glory.

"And do but look back to the crimes charged against us, and all the sufferings we lie under, and you may clearly see that not for any guilt done, or just law broken, that concerns man, are we thus punished, but for things which concern our God; and chiefly for bearing our witness, as we are moved of the Lord, against the false prophets and hirelings of these days, who by their fruits are made manifest, not only unto us, but to many thousands besides; yea, the greatest part of all the sober people of the nation, their own hearers will confess it, and we see and know that they and all ministries and worships in the world, set up and standing in the will of man (*i.e.*,

supported by the State.—Ed.) shall perish and come to nothing, and the rise of these men, their growth and end we comprehend, and see their downfall hasten greatly, and *all the powers of the earth shall not be able to support them*; and with them shall fall their tithes, their temples, their glebe lands, and offerings, their set days of worship in their wills, and all laws limiting the Holy One, made to uphold their craft; and blessed are they who, through the day of trial shall stand in their witness, faithful unto God, not fearing what man can do unto them.

“ Do not you approve Christ Jesus His going into the temple, and do not you own the Apostles who went into the Jews’ synagogues every Sabbath-day, and into the market places to testify of Christ Jesus, and reason with the people? And do not you commend Luther and Calvin, John Wickliffe, and others, as famous for their zeal in publishing abroad what *then* was manifest unto them; and *those persons which in Queen Mary’s days went into the Popish steeple-houses* to bear witness against their superstitions, which caused her to make a law against them, by which many of them suffered, and by which the priests of England, till the last parliament, were guarded, and it is now become an offence to practice the same thing? And is that a just law made by the late parliament by which many have suffered? Are not the priests sprung from the old root of Episcopacy, and it from the Pope? And are they not forced to fly thither for ordination? And is not that spirit the same which makes these laws to support them? *How* shall the kingdoms of the earth, the Papists, Turks, infidels, heathens, *be converted?* Your priests sit down in their ease and *will not go*, though they call themselves ministers of the ‘reformed church.’ And have not you taught other nations how to make laws to restrain the testimony of those whom the Lord sends, and is sending, into all the corners of the earth?

“ Did the command of the Lord, which gave tithes to the Jewish priesthood, concern the Gentiles? And was not the commandment to the Jews themselves dis-annulled when the priesthood was changed? Did ever any of the believing Jews pay tithes to the Apostles, or any of the Gentiles either? Did not the Papists bring in this doctrine and oppression? And did not many of the martyrs in Queen Mary’s days witness against tithes, and was not that an article for which some of them suffered? And do not you own and commend those martyrs, or do you judge them for holding an error? Has not all or most of those countries that turned from the Pope, and are called reformed, cast off tithes with the Pope, and were ashamed of them? And is it *the glory of England, who pretends to the highest reformation, to keep up tithes*, the Popish priests’ maintenance, and first fruits and tenths, the wages of the very Pope himself, and to hale before courts, cast into prisons, and spoil the goods of all those who, for conscience sake, cannot pay them? Let that of God answer.

“ And how many have, and at this day do suffer because they cannot swear, which Christ Jesus and His Apostles above all things forbid? How are the commands of Christ made void by the customs and traditions of men? Were it not easy, by turning the law against liars and false witnesses which the law of God is against, to find out that which your law against false swearing never did or could discover.”

“ Do you own Christ Jesus, of whom the Jews that put him to death gave God witness that he regarded no man’s person? Do you command Mordecai, who could not give the outward honour and bow to Haman? Do you regard his word who said:

'I know not to give flattering titles unto men, for in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.' Hath not God made of one mould and one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth? And doth not he that respects persons commit sin and is convinced of the law as a transgressor? and must it now be an offence not to put off your hat, or give respect to the person of him that hath a gold ring and fine apparel? Hath not all the earthly lordship, tyranny, and oppression sprung from this ground, by which creatures have been exalted and get up one above another, trampling under foot and despising the poor? and *is it not easy to see that power and authority without contempt may be preserved*, the power honoured, obeyed, and submitted unto, and the person not respected?

"Has not the great and heavy oppression of the law been long felt and cried out against, the long delays in courts, and the great fees of officers, which raises money to be excessively rich out of the ruin of the poor, which has brought an odium upon the law itself; for to the poor the remedy is frequently worse than the disease, and while people are free to feed this deceit, there is little hope to have it amended. And how full of lies, deceit, pretences, and needless circumstances, are all your pleadings and proceedings to the burden of many men's consciences and ruin of their estates, and how vile and wicked are the greatest part of lawyers that will plead any lying for money, and by their subtlety do most commonly hide and cover the truth, and when do the judges reprove it? And how treacherous and deceitful are the solicitors and attorneys, that truth and honesty can scarce be found amongst them, and how do these eat up the people, as it were bread, and grow great and rich by raising and increasing suits, troubles, strife and debate amongst their neighbours? And we, seeing these oppressions, are made to bear our witness against them, and cannot uphold them, and our testimony shall not be in vain.

"And how is the power given to justices and judges to bind to the peace and good behaviour, being left to their discretion, turned against the most peaceable and best behaved persons among men, merely because they cannot bow to their wills and hold their tongues, when the Lord God requires them to speak.

"Do you command Christ Jesus, his apostles and saints, who were sent to preach the gospel and travelled from city to city, from nation to nation, from country to country, that *the ends of the earth might hear the glad tidings of salvation?* And do you command those they called Puritans for going many miles to worship the Lord? And do you now condemn those that practise the same thing? Would not your law against vagabonds have taken hold of Christ and his ministers and hindered their work? By it have many honest and good people suffered most shameful whippings and imprisonments, who were travelling in their own country about their outward and lawful occasions, that were of considerable estates, and could not be committed vagabonds. And what use is made of this law throughout the nation, you cannot but hear.

"Are not these things like the sayings of those who said, had they lived in the days of the prophets they would not have persecuted and put them to death, and yet they crucified Christ, and so the cry at this day is against the Jews for their cruelty, when yourselves are found exercising the same things against his saints and members.

"Long hath the beast reigned and usurped power in these things, and the false prophets who have overspread the earth, and the great whore, who ~~have~~ made all

nations drunk with their abominations and the wine of their fornication, with whom the kings of the earth have committed adultery, whom Christ said should come, and before the apostle's decease did come, who went out from the apostles and put on their clothing, but inwardly were destroyers, ravening wolves, which the whole world went after; who turned against the saints who kept to the Spirit, the life which they went from, and made war with the saints till they overcame, and their power reached over the whole earth. But now is the life risen, and is again made manifest, which they went from, which gives to see before the apostacy was (*i.e.*, the state of the ancient Christian Church.—ED.). Now is the Lamb risen and rising to make war with the great dragon, the beast, and false prophets, and now shall the great whore be taken and her flesh shall be burnt with fire, and the saints shall have the victory.

"Therefore let all kings, rulers, magistrates, be warned not to take up with the beast, nor to uphold with their power the false prophets who have long devoured the nations. But in their place stand, to keep the outward peace, that none may offer violence or destroy (^{words obscure}) But leave Christ Jesus in his saints to manage the war, whose warfare is not carnal, whose weapons are not carnal, yet are they mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds and overturning the foundation of Satan's kingdom, and *they shall soon see what is truth and what is error; for great is the truth and will prevail.* They shall not need to cry out for want of ministers, or that *Christ Jesus is not able to send forth labourers*, nor will those he sends trouble them for maintenance. And here is the magistrate's true place, to keep peace amongst all men, to punish him that doth evil, and to encourage him that doth well; to rule the kingdoms of the earth in righteousness, that justice and equity may be exalted, that way may be made for the Lord Jesus Christ, who is coming to reign and to take the dominion to himself, and we are witnesses in our measure of his coming, and of the working of his mighty power, by which he is able to subdue all things to himself, and this is the testimony unto which we are called, and many thousands with us, in the unity of the same spirit.

"And witnesses we stand, against priests, tithes, temples, swearing and all the carnal way of worship *set up and upholden by outward laws and powers* which would limit and restrain the Spirit of the Lord, which is grieved, and daily cries out against these abominations.

"Witnesses we stand, against parliaments, councils, judges, justices, who make or execute laws in their wills, over *the consciences of men, or punish for conscience sake,* and to *such laws, customs, courts, or arbitrary and usurped dominion,* we cannot yield our obedience.

"Yet do we declare as it is testified in all counties, cities, gaols, and prisons, to judges, justices, and others, that as we preach Christ Jesus alone in the things of God to be our lawgiver, so do we own him to be our king (and our magistrate in things civil), not resisting the evil, but following his example who was made perfect through suffering, and for his salvation we wait till he alone shall plead our cause. And therefore, for conscience sake have we joyfully borne, and do bear, so many and great sufferings since the day we were convinced of the everlasting truth.

"These things we have declared, not to upbraid you with the injustice of others, nor to revile your government itself, nor as a complaint against our oppressors, but

that you may see the ground and true cause of all the sufferings of the saints in all ages and generations, and in all nations of the world this day. And we leave it to that of God in you all to weigh and consider whether it be not time to reform both laws, courts and officers.

“From the Friends who are lovers of peace and truth, who wait for the coming of the Lord to establish justice and righteousness in the earth, whom he hath raised up as witnesses of his appearing and of the dawning of the mighty and dreadful day of God in light, life, and power, who are hated of men, and reproached with the name of Quakers.

“GER. ROBERTS.(a)	JOHN FIELDEN.(h)
F. BYLLYNGE.(b)	THO. MOORE.
THOMAS CURTIS.(c)	NETH. BOND.
AMOS STODDART.(d)	JOHN CROOK.(i)
THOMAS HARTAS.	ANT. PEARSON.(j)
JOHN SMYTH.	WM. ISBURNE.(k)
ROBERT SYKES.	WALTER CLEMENT.
RICHARD DAVIES.(e)	WM. WOODCOCK.
SAMUEL FISHER.(f)	JOHN AIKEN.
THOMAS COURNEY.(g)	SAMUEL HAUGE.”

(a) Of London. (b) Captain. (c) Captain. (d) Captain. (e) Of Wales. (f) Celebrated Baptist. (g) Thos. Coveney of London. (h) John Field of London. (i) Justice of the Peace in 1654. (j) Justice of the Peace in 1652. (k) Osborne.

[Original paper by Naylor, illustrative of the controversy between the Early Friends of 1653, and the Calvinists, on the subject of Holiness and Christian perfection, against what Fox calls “sin for term of life.—Vol. 586—5, Brit. Museum, King’s Pamphlets, several papers, &c., 1653.]

SEVERALL QUERIES TO BE ANSWERED BY THOMAS LEDGARD, OR ANY OF THOSE HE BANKES WITH HIMSELF, UNDER THE NAME OF ANTI-QUAKERS.

1. Did not God create man and woman perfect in his own image, without sinne? (Gen. i. 27.)
2. Did not the first sin make a seperation betwixt God and man? (Gen. iii. 23, 24.)
3. Whether, is there any other way to unite God and man into spirituall communion againe, but by being seperated from the works of the flesh, sinne, and uncleannessse, and being redeemed into his first estate? (1 John, i. 3, 6, 7.)
4. Was not that the end for which Christ was manifest in the flesh, that by taking away sinne he might restore man into his first estate in which he was created, in the image of God without sinne? (1 John, iii. 5, 8.)
5. Whether any can witnesse the worke of redemption perfected in them while they commit sinne? (1 John, iii. 34, 36.)
6. Whether any unperfect, uncleane, and sinfull one shall enter into the kingdom—yea or no? (1 Cor. vi. 9; Gal. v. 21.)

7. Was not that the end for which the Scriptures were written, to warne all to turne from sinne to holinesse? (1 Cor. x. 6, 11.)

8. Shall not God justly judge every one as he finds them at the day of judgment, they that have done good into life eternall, and they that have lived in sinne into everlasting fire? And whether doe you look for a purgatory to cleanse you from your sins between the day of death and the day of judgment? (Matt. xxv. 13 to the end.)

9. Whether a Christian have ground to believe, and ought to waite for it, that he shall be redeemed by the second *Adam* into that estate which he lost by sin in the first *Adam*? (1 Cor. xv. 22.)

10. Are not all that are servants of sin, out of the covenant and under the power of darknesse, and in the kingdome of the devill? (Col. i. 13.)

11. Is there any promise in Scripture due to any who have not confessed and forsaken their sins; but all the plagues written in the Book are to fall upon that generation of evill doers? (Prov. xxviii. 13, and xi. 21.)

12. Was it not the onely end why all the true Ministers of Christ, both now and ever, were begifted and sent into the world (to wit) to call people out of sinne and to perfect the saints in holinesse and to present them perfect to God? (Ephes. iv. 10, 12, 13; Col. i. 28.)

13. Whether all those who both by life and doctrine encourage people to abide in that condition of sin, imperfection and separation from God (which Christ came to take away, and so to unite God and man againe) doe not oppose the worke of redemp-
tion and withstand the onely end of Christ's comming, and so are Ministers of Anti-
Christ, and labour to uphold the kingdome of the devill? (2 Thes. ii. 3 to 11.)

Now all you who pleade for sin in yourselves or others, consider these things, and see if you doe not withstand the love of God in giving Jesus Christ into the world to cleanse from all sin all that believe in Him, and so to present you to the Father without spot or blemish, and so you are the greatest enemies to your eternall salvation. How will you stand before the Lord at that great day, who would have gathered you out of your sins, but you would not, but have joyned with the devill to uphold the wall of seperation between God and you. Woe unto you, yee whited walls. (Ephes. iii. 27; Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.)

J. N.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SEEKERS AND RANTERS UPON THE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. THE RISE AND PREVALENCE OF THE VIEWS OF THE RANTERS. THE SUCCESSFUL PROMULGATION OF THEIR VIEWS AMONG THE SEEKERS. THE "SPIRITUELS" OF CALVIN'S TIME. THE OPINIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE RANTERS. THE MUGGLETONIANS. THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT, PERSECUTION, AND WAR, IN PRODUCING RELIGIOUS MADNESS. NAYLOR.

"Ask men now, 'What shall be next?'
The folks have many minds;
Few can expound this knotty text,
So various are their minds.

"But this is very plain:
All, all will shortly down,
Returning to their dust again,
And One shall wear the Crown."

"Oh, people do not mind,
Nor talk of transient things;
The God Eternal seek to find
With strong immortal wings.

"It matters not at all
How this short world doth go;
For every one must stand or fall
In endless joy or woe."*

WE have before stated, that large numbers of the "Seekers," and "Ranters" were swept into the ranks of the "Children of the Light."† The Seekers, and some of the more mystical sects, such as the Familists and Boehmenites, probably exercised a subtle influence in

* "An Honest Discoverie," &c. London, 1655.

† "Good reader. By this be pleased to take notice, that some people, all over Yorkshire, having turned out prayer, preaching, and the ordinances of God, and counting them too low things to follow, the *old Seeker*, who goes about continually seeking whom he may devour, hath fallen upon them. . . . That which these ignorant souls so ungroundedly build, if a *Fox* go up he shall even break down their stone wall. He hath sent a *Fox*, and he hath done it!"—"The Querers' and Quakers' Cause at the Second Hearing, &c. The Quaking and Entranced Faction discovered to be a New Branch of an Old Root revived by Satan," &c. London, 1652.

giving a greater prominence to the mystical element which existed in early Quakerism.

The great preachers of the New Society were, to a large extent, free from its evil influence. Indeed, the vigorous practical warfare they were waging against open sin, as well as outward institutions, which they regarded as the embodiment of great spiritual evils in the visible Church of Christ, tended in a great measure to preserve them.

But if we would understand a very curious chapter in the history of the rising Society, we shall have to consider the principles of the two largest sections of the least orderly Sects of the Commonwealth. We shall see Fox and his coadjutors at war with principles which may be directly traced to the influence of the Seekers and Ranters, and which have often been confounded with the original views of the Society of Friends. We have hitherto seen them struggling with persecution and opposition from without, and we shall now see them exerting themselves to the utmost to prevent their Church from being torn in pieces by forces which had found a resting place in its bosom, and of whose destructive power they had hitherto had no experience.

We have traced, in an earlier portion of this work, the origin of the Seekers' opinions to Holland, and we think their views originated among the German Baptists at, or prior to, the period of the Reformation.* The first notice of these people which we have met with, as a

* Compare pages 173 and 174 of this work, with the following, as to the origin of the "Seekers":—"Sebastian Franck's Chronica," 1536, page CC, part iii.—"Bäpst und Geystlichen händel von Petro bisz auff Clementem."

Respecting the Baptists: "Some desire to allow Baptism and other ceremonies to remain in abeyance till God gives another command—sends out true labourers into his harvest—some have, with great desire, a longing for this, and desire nothing else. Some others agree with these, who think the ceremonies since the death of the Apostles, are

distinct religious body in England, is in one of the first publications of two members of the English Mennonite, or General Baptist body, bearing the initials of the celebrated John Morton, in 1617, which would incline us to the belief that the opinions of the Seekers were propagated in England in connection with the General Baptist or Mennonite Churches, and also that some of the Seekers, gradually abandoning their attitude of waiting upon God, and searching the Scriptures for "New Light," and acknowledging no Church officers endowed with any special powers as teachers, easily fell a prey to the subtle views of the Ranters, whose excesses were the natural result of the principles of pantheism, carried out into vigorous action by the intense religious excitement of the period.

The great body of General Baptists, and of the Society of Friends, were preserved by their reverence for the authority of the New Testament Scriptures, to the letter of which, interpreted by Christians whose lives and conduct showed that they were influenced by the Holy Spirit, they will be found, substantially, if not always verbally, to have made their final appeal, and by which they tested all religious teaching. Their refusal to be bound by the "dead letter" of Scripture, was merely a claim that *true Christians* were the only safe interpreters of the sacred volume.

We believe it will be found, that every error, in either doctrine or practice, which has been proved by experience to be destructive of the visible Church of Christ—from the

equally defiled, laid waste, and fallen—that God no longer heeds them, and also does not desire that they should be longer kept, on which account they will never again be set up, but now are to proceed entirely in Spirit and in Truth, and never in an outward manner, so that it is as unbecoming that we should come to the Wine—as that we should go back to the *pointer* when we have found the road—or that we should look behind ourselves to the statue. These people will not acknowledge the Baptists for brethren, but exclude them, and are against them with mouth and pen."

errors of the Roman Catholic Church, to the Ranters of the Commonwealth times—may be traced to the principle of supplementing, on various pretences, the account we have in the New Testament of the nature of the Christian religion, and the general principles of Church government, and Church extension, we there find laid down.

Morton thus addresses the “Seekers,” in 1617: “Oh, ye Seekers, I would ye sought aright, and not beyond the Scriptures, calling it carnal; and ye speak also against Christ, and set Him at light, and are not ashamed to say that there is none saved by the blood of Christ, and that it is of no value at all, and that they look upon the Scriptures as nothing by preaching up a *libertine* doctrine to the people, and that they need not hear preaching, nor read the Scriptures, nor live in obedience thereto.”*

In 1655, we learn that there were “many of the Seekers upon whom the spirit of Ranterism” had “not prevailed.” † John Jackson ‡ tells us that “some of the Seekers, after further waiting on God, waxed weary, and said, ‘Come let us go back to Egypt for bread, it is better to take it at the mouth of *Ravens* (*i.e.*, the Presbyterian black-gowned clergy) than starve!’” These were, as he said, “sad” utterances, but this was only one phase of the movement which, prior to the preaching of George Fox, was transforming many of the numerous congregations of the Seekers into Ranters.

The severe morality of the earliest followers of Fox, and their clear, definite, and practical views, erected a barrier

* “*Truth’s Champion*,” &c., 1st edition published, 1617; p. 154, 3rd edition. General Baptist Library, Chilworth.

† “*A Doubt Resolved, or Satisfaction for the Seekers.*” William Allen, London, 1655. General Baptist College Library, Chilworth. See p. 15. The name of the writer of this work appears, among other signatures (see p. 327, “*Hansard Knollys’ Confession of Faith*”) as a *General Baptist*.

‡ Whom Baxter says, in his “*Key for Catholics*,” p. 332, was one of the “sound sort of Seekers.”

against the further progress of Ranterism.* Their message to the Seekers appears to have been, that they "the Children of the Light," had *found* what the Seekers were vainly "waiting" for. One of the early Friend preachers tells a Seeker, "that the kingdom of God consists not in *groaning for adoption*, but in righteousness, peace and joy," and that "none are sons but those who are adopted." He "reads of" only two kingdoms—the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Satan—"in Scripture," and he evidently regards the Seekers as occupying a dangerous position between the two. They had found the light which the Seekers were painfully groping after, and were conscious of their adoption into the family of God.

Jackson distinguishes the Seekers into three sections:—
 1st. Those who are *against* all ordinances (*i.e.*, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the public preaching of the Gospel, definite times and places for public worship, &c.) 2ndly. Those who see not *sufficient ground* for the *present* practice of ordinances. 3rdly. Those who are *above* or *beyond* all ordinances. He remarks that the first, properly speaking, should not be called "Seekers," and that the last are certainly not Seekers, but "enjoyers and attainers." For our purposes we may class the first and last sections as those who were rapidly merged in the opinions and practices of the Ranters.

These religionists have hitherto only been described as a licentious and blasphemous sect. Several of their most active preachers were punished by the Commonwealth for blasphemy. But in dealing with the religionists of this period, great care has to be exercised in considering

* "Judge Hotham said, 'If God had not raised up this principle of Light and Life, which I preached, the nation had been overrun with Ranterism.'—"G. F.'s Journal," 1651. Penn also remarks (p. 31 of "Judas and the Jews), that "Dr. Gell said, that had not the Quakers come, the Ranters had overrun the nation."

whether the extreme statements so often made respecting their opinions, are merely alleged by persons anxious to destroy religious liberty, and whether they are altogether borne out by the facts of the case. We have also to make a large allowance for the tendency of the men of the age to condemn strongly all those who differed from them.

The Ranters appeared in England, under that name, not earlier than about 1640 to 1641. In "Winthrop's History of New England," there is a notice, in 1641, of the opinions of the Seekers being broached in America ; and shortly after this we find that the opinions of the Ranters were held by certain "gentlemen of high esteem in civil life, and at different times governors of the colony,"* while at a later period the opinions of the Ranters are distinctly alluded to as of foreign origin.†

In 1573, Strype informs us that certain religionists held that "reason was the means to come to a knowledge of the Word"—that "there was no Devil," and that "whoever had God's Spirit could not sin."‡ He calls them "Liber-tines," a name which Calvin gave to certain religionists who called themselves "Spirituels."

Calvin published a tract against them in 1545.§ He considered them a branch of the Anabaptists, but the latest investigation into their origin, renders it probable that their peculiar opinions were derived from "The Brethren of the Free Spirit," who are mentioned by Pope Clement V., in a letter to the Bishop of Cremona as early as 1311, and who lingered in Flanders longer than any other part of the north

* "Winthrop's History," by J. Savage, Boston, 1853, vol. ii., pp. 46, 48, 49, note.

† See "Bowden's History of Friends in America."

‡ "Annals of the Reformation," vol. ii., part ii., p. 287.

§ "Aux Ministres de l'Eglise de Neufchâtel Contre la Secte Fanatique et Furieuse des Libertines qui se nomment 'Spirituels.'"

of Europe. In 1525 the doctrines of the "Brethren of the Free Spirit" were spread at Antwerp, and Luther received at Wittenburg a visit from one of these religionists, and he consequently wrote a letter to the Christians at Antwerp, condemning their opinions.

Calvin informs us that a certain Coppin first taught their tenets in Lille. Then a certain Quentin from Hainault became yet more famous as a propagator of their views. About 1534 he went to France and spread his heresies in Paris, and there Calvin met him, and in several discussions. In these he amusingly tells us he "rabattit vivement le câquet" of the said Quentin. His views were spread in France by Claude Parçeval, and a priest of the name of Antoine Pocques. In 1540, Pocques was for a time at Strasburg, and obtained in some sort the confidence of Bucer. Margaret of Navarre protected at her court Quentin and Pocques, and she was displeased with Calvin's satirical tract respecting her protégé, and signified the same to him, and he therefore wrote to her on the subject in 1545. Pocques was at Geneva in 1542.

These "Spirituels," as they called themselves, held that they were called to inaugurate the last dispensation. The dispensations of Moses and Christ were to be succeeded by that of the Holy Spirit, or of Elias, and this last time had come. The Apostles, and after them the Church, had only known the Lord "in a figure." The times were now come in which the knowledge of a new, spiritual, and living Christ—mystically hidden from the times of Christ and the Apostles—is now immediately revealed to the Christian.

It is needful for us to forsake and to annihilate ourselves, and thus to realise the fact that God, by His Spirit, dwells in every creature, and works all things. We thus become one with God. We are now freed from the dead-letter of

Scripture, and see in it a double meaning. We become a law unto ourselves. The external law is abolished. Our acts are now no longer our own, but those of God. The principle of evil has, therefore, no real existence. If we fall involuntarily into sin, great good may result, and we rise from our fall animated by a greater horror of evil. The man who has realised the union of the human and Divine natures is no longer constrained by *anything outward*, because God determines his acts, and directs his thoughts. He yields up his own will to that of God. The Church of God was "in faithful hearts," and they could therefore conform to the ceremonies of either the Roman Catholics or the Protestants.

Like the "Brethren of the Free Spirit," the "Spirituels" did not form a society properly so called. They preached, gained partisans, and completed their instruction by sending them books, but they nowhere succeeded in forming a community of any importance.

We have entirely failed in tracing the continued existence of these "Spirituels," or "Brethren of the Free Spirit," in distinct societies, between this period and 1640. We believe, however, that traces of their continued existence will be found in Holland or Belgium, between 1545 and 1640, and that these views had a distinctly foreign origin.*

The following account of the doctrines of the English Ranters is extracted from contemporaneous sources, which give a fair and candid statement of their views, and one which is supported by the evidence furnished by their own publications; and it may be said that the works, which are the production of the more sober and rational members of the fraternity, are rarely met with.

* Barclay, in his "Anarchy of the Ranters," associates them with the "more moderate" of the Munster Anabaptist party "in England."

"They maintain," says a temperate writer, "that God is essentially in every creature," although "He doth not manifest Himself so much in one as in another." The essence of God was as much in the ivy leaf as in the most glorious angel. That there is but one Spirit in the world; and those names of Good Spirit and Bad Spirit are mere imaginations and scarecrows to feare men withal. That when men die their spirits go into God, as the small rivers go into the sea; and as the sea sends back the same water again sometimes into one spring, and sometimes into another, so with the spirits of men in a future state. They are taught by this Spirit, that all other teachings, either by Scripture or otherwise, are of no use to them. The Scriptures they called "a tale, a history, a letter, and a dead letter, the fleshly history, and a bundle of contradictions. The Scripture was the cause of all the misery and divisions, both in religious and civil affairs." They admitted that Paul the Apostle had the Spirit of God, by which he wrote the Scripture. "Have not I," said one of them, "the Spirit, and why may I not write the Scripture as well as Paul, and what I write be as binding and infallible as that which Paul writ?"* Christ they held to be a fleshly apparition of God. That what Christ did and suffered in his own person was only a *figure*, or a *type*, of what should be done and acted in every man. The ministry of Aaron is ceased, and so now the ministry of Christ and his Apostles

* To show the distinction between these views and those of the ancient Society of Friends, we annex an extract from the poster (*preserved in the British Museum*) which was posted and distributed in London, on the occasion of one of these people, who had formerly belonged to the Society of Friends, publicly burning a Bible, to "disown J. Pennyman's burning, or attempting to burn, the Bible on the Exchange, 10th of the month called August, 1670." We "declare and testify that we dearly and truly own the Holy Scriptures, before mentioned, given by inspiration, as a true and infallible testimony of Christ, spoken forth by the Holy Spirit (which is our Guide, Teacher, and Leader), and that they are written for our learning," &c.—855 f 7.

is ceased, and the ministry of the Spirit is begun. We are no longer to "eye or mind" Christ that died at Jerusalem, but we are to mind Christ *in ourselves*. They were "above all such weak and beggarly things as ordinances, which were made for weak Christians, who are under the teaching of the letter," *i. e.*, the Scriptures. That there is no occasion for them to read the Scriptures, nor hear sermons, because Father, Son, and Spirit were all *in them*, and that they "living *in God* and God *in them*, therefore they are above all commandments whatsoever." That there is no such thing as what men call sin. That sin and holiness are all one to God. They also contend that, in prayer, it was God in them that prayed. Very curious is the opinion which they held, that "the world had been made many thousand millions of years before we read of its creation, and that it shall continue many millions longer than we expect." The world was evidently created long before the time the Scriptures speak of; for, say they, "when Cain fled from the presence of the Lord, he went into the land of Nod, and there he built a city. He could not build a city himself, and it was needless for his household. One house or tent would have served him;" therefore they argue that there were at that time more people in the world than Adam and Cain, though we read of no more. There is no such thing as "the Day of Judgment—but the day of Judgment has begun already."*

* "The Smoke of the Bottomlesse Pit, or, A More True and Fuller Discovery of the Doctrine of those which (are) themselves Ranters; or, The Mad Crew." By John Holland Porter, an eye and ear witness. London, 1650-51. Postscript at end:—"Reader, I have not followed that orderly method I might have done, but have written the judgements of these men in a confused manner; but I do profess, in the presence of the Lord, who is the searcher of all hearts, I have done them no wrong in the matter of their judgement, except it be in forbearing to repeat their bloody cursing and swearing—for this offence I hope that those who fear the Lord will excuse me. Farewell."

Nothing could be more widely separated than the opinions and objects of the Ranters and the Early Friends. The tendency of the views promulgated so actively by the Ranters appears to have been *to destroy all faith in revealed religion*, and particularly to attack *every principle of Church government* of whatever kind, by confusing the doctrine of the real guidance of the Christian by the Holy Spirit, with an absolute personal union between themselves and God, and the consequent assertion of their own personal infallibility. Hence some of them even claimed that they were manifestations of the Godhead,* that "sin was no sin." Some preached the doctrine of community of goods.† Some maintained, that since God was in every creature, there was "no difference between man and beast," but that a man carries a *more lively image of the Divine Being* than any other creature.‡ Men usually considered God as "locally in heaven," and "as without them;" but *they* believed "God to be *in them*," "framing their thoughts and working their works," and hence they used no "set times of prayer," nor "ran to formal duties and other outward and low services of God." They turned the meaning of Scripture into a kind of allegory, and, as the writer says, "If he had the same discovery that *they* (the writers of the

* One named W. Smith was hung "for denying the Deity, and several illegal practices against the Parliament."—"The Ranters," King's Pamphlets, British Museum, ε 486, 10. See also "Smoke of Bottomlesse Pit," quoted above. "One made answer he was *not the God*, but he was God because God was in him, and every creature in the world."

† "The Ranter's Declaration," ε 486, 2, British Museum.

‡ "The Light and Dark Sides of God. The Light side: God, Heaven, and Earth; the Dark Side: Devil, Sin, and Hell."—"The Spiritual man judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of none." Written by Jacob Bauthumley.—William Larner, London, 1650. We print a portion of this as a specimen of their literature.—Fox met and disputed with this man.—See "Journal," 3rd ed., fo. p. 120, Anglicised "Jacob Bottomley."

Scriptures) had, then he could say it was the ‘Word of God.’” He believed it, not because “such and such writ it,” but because “God saith so *in me.*”—*Ibid.* They appear to have been animated by a fierce fanaticism, and among them were many persons whom we should call lunatic.*

Lodowick Muggleton gives an account of two Ranters, of the names of John Tannye, or Tany, and John Robins, which clearly manifest this to have been the case. He was attracted by the news, in the year 1650, that several prophets and prophetesses of this extraordinary people had declared the day of the Lord in the streets. Muggleton evidently lived for some time in close connection with them and their followers. Tannye declared himself to be the Lord’s High Priest; “that he was to gather together the Jews out of all nations,” and lead them to Mount Olivet. As for Robins, he declared that he had risen from the dead, and that he was Melchisedek, whose body had been dead “five thousand six hundred and odd years.” He blasphemously declared his divinity, &c. He declared that he had raised from the dead Cain, Judas, Jeremiah, Benjamin, and several of the prophets; and, Muggleton adds: “I saw all those that were said to be raised by John Robins, and *they owned themselves to be the very same persons* that had been dead for so long a time. Also I saw several others of the prophets that were said to be raised by him, and they did own that they were the same, for I have had nine or ten of them *at my house* at a time of those that were said to be raised from the dead. For *I do not speak this from hearsay* from others, but from a perfect knowledge, which I have seen and heard from themselves.” They appear to have

* Bloody news from the North, and the Ranting Adamites’ Declaration. Some, “of late revived,” thought it “a sin to wear a garment, and they wear nothing that covers, only skin and hair” (? haircloth.)

wrought pretended miracles, consisting of certain lights and apparitions in the dark, "when they covered their faces in bed;" and the whole account which Muggleton gives, supports the view, that these persons were mad, and had a singular power of producing a kind of sympathetic madness or temporary aberration of intellect in others.

The reaction from the pantheism of the Ranters Muggleton associated with, caused him to start upon an independent and equally wild prophetical career with John Reeve, as the "Two Witnesses of the Spirit" mentioned in the Revelations, chapter xi. They declared themselves to be the Lord's Last Messengers, and forerunners of the visible appearing of Christ. They were commissioned to declare eternal life and death to individuals, and also a new system of faith and religion to mankind, which embodied an intense realism of conception, the very reverse of the pantheism of the Ranters. We give, in a note below, the main tenets of the sect, whose adherents exist at the present time. "They countenance," says their historian, Mr. Gordon, "no *form* of worship whatever, and their gatherings are almost entirely of a festive character."*

* See "The Acts of the Witnesses of the Spirit, by Lodowick Muggleton." London, 1699, pp. 20, 21. Mr. Alexander Gordon says this was written in 1677. This extraordinary book gives an excellent idea of the principles of "Muggletonianism." It is written in the style of Scripture, and divided into verses. The origin of the fearful curses which these people uttered, is found in the division of all mankind into two races as below, sixthly. They believed—First. "That God spake to John Reeve to the hearing of the ear, and that God chose John Reeve to be his last messenger to this unbelieving world, and that God gave him Lodowicke Muggleton, to be his mouth to disclose the mind of God to us in this our age." Secondly. "The doctrine and declaration of John Reeve and Lodowicke Muggleton to be as true as declared by Moses, the prophets and apostles of old." Thirdly. "That there would be no salvation for those that are in our days, and who have heard of the witnesses of the Spirit, and seen or heard their declaration, and yet cannot believe." Fourthly. "That Jesus Christ is the only wise God in one single person," &c. Fifthly. "That God was a spiritual glorious body *in form like a man* from all eternity, and that when he came on earth in the form of Christ, Moses

To return to our account of the Ranters : they interrupted the peaceable assemblies of the people called Quakers, by singing and dancing, and falling on the floor, as well as coming in sackcloth and ashes; and they indulged in fearful denunciations and prophecies, and some of their books were burnt by order of the Parliament.* Samuel Fisher, writing in 1653, tells us : "They considered that in the present dispensation, which is that of the Spirit, since Christ had come again spiritually, they had no longer any need of 'lower helps,' 'outward administrations,' 'carnal ordinances,' 'visible representations of Christ,' and 'mere bodily exercises,' as baptism and fellowship together in breaking of bread." The Church once saw Christ in these things, but they had become men, and "put away childish things;" and as for "gathering congregations, people assembling in the church bodies to preach, break bread, to build up one another in the faith, search the Scriptures," &c.—all these shadowy dispensations had their day ; but now "Christ, the Morning Star, had shined," all we had to do was to take heed to His appearing in our hearts, and "the shadows would flee away." They promised to their

and Elias represented Him bodily in heaven." Sixthly. "That the souls of all men since Adam, are as mortal as their bodies, until the resurrection day." Seventhly. "That the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent are two distinct generations of men and women in this world, and that the difference and opposition which ariseth between believer and unbelievers, &c., comes from this fact." See "Articles of True Faith depending upon the Commission of the Spirit," by John Saddington, 1675. Their other articles of faith present no special features. See also Mr. Gordon's two pamphlets—"The Origin of the Muggletonians," 1869, and "Ancient and Modern Muggletonians," 1870, where the reader will find an interesting account of the connection of these people with J. Robins, Tany, Lawrence Claxton, and others.

* *E. g.*—"A Fiery Flying Roll ; a Word from the Lord to all the Great Ones of the Earth : being the Last Warning Piece at the Dreadful Day of Judgment, with a Terrible and Fatal Blow from the Lord upon all the Gathered Churches." By Abiezer Coppe. London, 1649 ; Coventrie, 1650.

converts, that when they left off "reading the Scriptures," and "these childish things," they would then have "the liberty of the Spirit,"* and would enjoy "an Angelical or Seraphical Life."

(Fox met with these people first, in 1649. Some at Coventry asserted their divinity, and "ranted, vapoured, and blasphemed," at which his "soul was greatly grieved." Some at Cleveland had "*spoken themselves dry*," and "had," he tells us, "some sort of meetings still, but *they took tobacco and drank ale in their meetings*, and had grown light and loose." At Hull, Fox denounced them. At Swannington they "sang, whistled, and danced." At Charing Cross he met with the great Ranter, Cobbe. He mentions their prophecy that London should be destroyed in fourteen days, and that they were "great opposers of Friends," and "disturbers of our meetings," and were often immoral in their lives.

W. Penn states that the Ranters interpreted Christ's fulfilling of the law for us, to be a discharging of us from any obligation and duty that the law required, and that all things a man did were good, if he only did them with a mind and persuasion that it was so, and that many of them fell into gross and enormous practices.†)

The pantheistic views of the Ranters of the Commonwealth have their counterpart in our own times. If they are not characterized by the fervid religious excitement of the times we are describing, may we not in passing learn the lesson, that the ultimate issue of a blending of

* S. Fisher—"Anti-Ranterism." See "Baby Baptism, mere Babism," pp. 512, 516. London, 1653.

† See Penn's preface to "Fox's Journal." See also their teaching concerning marriage, set forth in "The Smoke of the Bottomless Pit," &c., by John Holland Porter, London, 1651; also Abiezer Coppe's "Return to the Ways of Truth," 1651.

pantheism and Christianity, is the destruction of the Church as a visible society, and that, by confounding our instinctive notions of right and wrong, pantheism slowly yet surely saps the foundations of common morality.

It must not, however, be supposed that all these people went to the extremes here described, but such were unquestionably some of the materials which Fox and his coadjutors welded into a compact and beneficial religious society, by the powerful influence they were enabled to exert. We may trace, perhaps, in this element, the origin of some of the aberrations of their earlier followers. They were working in an atmosphere of intense religious excitement, which existed before they commenced preaching. This was at its height before their Society was founded, and we think that sufficient allowance has not been made for the fact, that in a large number of cases, the intellectual powers gave way, and the result was religious madness. This was partly owing to the excited state of the public mind, and to the effects of fines, inflicting temporal ruin on respectable families; also to insufficient diet, and depression of the nervous system, owing to confinement in wretched prisons at the mercy of ferocious jailors.

As an illustration of this, in 1654, George Beck, the jailor of Appleby prison, "would not suffer "the Friends confined there "to have water." He "beat Christopher Taylor" (formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, and a man of ability and education) "very desperately," and "twice held a blazing candle under his chin, and afterwards under his nose." To the honour of Cromwell, on hearing of it, he discharged the jailor without a moment's delay.*

* Swarthmore Papers, D.H. The awful sufferings which imprisonment in those days might involve, may be illustrated by the dimension of "Little Ease," or "Hole in

The instance of Naylor is, we consider, a case in point. He was a man of respectable character, and his controversial tracts, compared with others of that period, show him to have been a man of no mean ability. He was a preacher of sufficient power and eloquence to attract many titled members of the Protector's Court. There is every reason to believe that, during the earlier period of his life, his ministry was in the best sense successful. He was trusted by Fox, and possessed, up to the period of his preaching in London, the confidence of the Society. This was, no doubt, a period of great strain on his physical and mental powers. He left London, and was imprisoned at Exeter. It was after his liberation from the Devon common jail, that he made his entry into Bristol; and the actions of a man who was in a state fit only for temporary confinement in a lunatic asylum, have been commented upon as one of *the legitimate developments of extreme religious opinions*, as a kind of culminating point of the fanaticism of the age, and as a sort of attempt at a realisation of wild dreams of the Second Coming of Christ, and the Kingdom of the Saints.* We give verbatim a quotation from the Swarthmore Papers.

the Rock," in Chester Jail. It was "seventeen inches from the back to the inside of the great door, at the top seven inches, at the shoulders eight inches, at the breast nine and a half inches; from top to bottom one and a half yard, and boards to reduce the height to one yard."—Page 42, "Cain's Bloody Race."

* Professor Weingarten, in his "Revolutions Kirchen Englands," Leipsic, 1868, has been misled by the importance attached by English writers to an affair which resolves itself into the temporary insanity of Naylor, and the excitement of three women. The Friends in Bristol and elsewhere *did not participate* in it (see p. 320), and the most searching investigation, to which the matter was subjected, palpably shows its isolated character. Professor Weingarten makes it the turning point of a vast Chiliastic movement, which was to have produced an English Munster! The South-west of England was the seat of a great Anabaptist movement, and was therefore selected, in his opinion, by Naylor. He asserts (p. 271) that: "So war, Naylor's Sache in Grunde die gemeinsame Sache des Quäkerthums und als Solche ward Sie auch vom Parlamente

Thomas Rawlinson to George Fox, dated 23rd June, 1656, a letter in which he informs Fox of the excited state in which Naylor then was. "James Naylor is here with me. . . . He hath been in a fast. He eat no bread but *one little bit*, for a whole month; when I came to him he took *no manner of food*, but some days a pint of white wine, and some days a gill mingled with water, but now he eats meat."* We

aufgefasst und gehandelt."* In fact, that the whole idea of Quakerism was originally, he conceives, that of the erection of the Visible Kingdom of the Saints, and that, disappointed in this undertaking, their attention was turned to Christ's Spiritual Kingdom in the heart. He ends his remarks with the following eloquent passage:—"The Kingdom of the Saints upon earth, from this period, gently vanished from their sight, and indeed, from history also, like a mirage of the desert!" Professor Wein-garten's book is a most interesting volume, and has the advantage of being perfectly free from all party bias. He is right that at this period the idea of a coming Fifth Monarchy was *most widely* spread among every class of religionists, and more so than English historians have admitted; but there is *no evidence whatever* that we are aware of, which will bear the construction that the Friends, to say nothing of others, contemplated the use of worldly force. The outbreak of the "Fifth Monarchy Men" occurred after this date, which proves, if proof were needed, that these views were cherished afterwards; and also it may be remarked, that there is strong evidence that this outbreak was equally condemned by all parties among the Baptists and Independents.

* See "Burton's Diary," vol. i., by Rutt, London, 1828, p. 24. *Et seq.* This idea was not suggested by any of the speakers in the debates, the greater part of them being strongly opposed to the rising sect. Barclay, p. 876, of the "Apology Vindicated," says in reply to J. Brown, who had asked him "What he thinketh of that honour and worship that was given to James Naylor, as he rode into Bristol, Oct. 24, 1656," replies, "I answer, I think it was both wicked and abominable, and so do the people called Quakers, who thereupon disavowed him and all those that had an hand in it."

* This was probably the letter which induced Fox to visit him in the prison at Exeter. We print a petition from his wife to Cromwell and the Council, not, we believe, before printed. This shows, first the fearful sufferings and cruel treatment entailed on him by imprisonment, and also that from other sources, it was known that he had abstained from food to the verge of starvation, which his wife, not knowing the facts of the case, calls "a false report."

Interregnum Petitions—N. P.—at State Paper Office. Folio bound vols. arranged alphabetically.

"Anne Naylor,

"To His Highness and the Council.

Petition, The Representation and Petition of Anne Naylor, wife of
Read 24th Feb., 1656.

James Naylor,

"SHEWETH,

"That notwithstanding all the extreme sufferings of my husband, when his body stood need of refreshing for his recovery, yet he is cast into that called the 'Hole

venture to think that this incident is either sufficient to show that he was insane at that time, or to account, on the strength of physical causes alone, for a temporary aberration of intellect, although the form his insanity took might be modified and determined by prevalent notions.*

in Bridewell,' a cold, dampish, unsavory place, where the damp strikes up his legs like water, when he requires air and fire; kept under three keys, put in three several men's hands, that when one is present another is absent; and is not allowed so much as a candle; being in the hands of cruel and unmerciful men, who neither will suffer me, his wife, to come to him, except four governors be present, nor suffer what I carry him to come to him, who much increase his misery beyond all orders of Parliament; their preventing of your own order may be sufficient proof to you what cruel minds are in them, for though you ordered his wife's coming to him, and that they should see that he be accommodated with convenient necessaries, yet neither of these is done, because (they say) it is referred to them. Whereas the order says expressly, to see that he be accommodated with convenient necessaries.

"His keepers are cruel also, one especially, Win by name, who when my husband desired a little fair conduit water, because one had put a little sugar in it, he poured it into the kennel; another time he turned back a poor dish of turnips and would not let them go in, besides divers other things which I would have carried him, to preserve his life; and this is not all, but *they have raised a false report of my husband, to harden your and all other men's hearts against him, saying that he starves himself*, and will not eat what is carried him, when as his body is so weak that he cannot eat that which is strong. He told the governors, in my hearing, that he did but eat a bit of flesh meat which they brought him, and he was very ill after it, but said also, that he did not refuse such things as he could eat.

"And truly I cannot otherwise think, but that his keepers and others have a design to starve him, for they have kept his condition from me as much as they could, and having brought him so weak for want of convenient food (that now they have a cover for themselves) they have sent to the doctor, one Dr. Nurse, unknown to me, which the doctor finding him so weak, that he prescribed him milk with sugar of roses to take, whereby you may understand that this is not feigned.

"My humble request, therefore, is that you would be pleased (if he must continue longer in prison) that he may be where he may have air and fire, and be allowed candle-light, and the attendance and company of his own wife, or one whom she shall appoint, to supply him with convenient necessaries out of his own state, and be but under one, lock.

"But rather, that you would be pleased wholly to release him, for his family's sake, who have not offended you (he having suffered all the part of your sentence, and lying only a prisoner during pleasure), that his body may be refreshed by air and comfortable looking to, if it may be.

"ANNE NAYLOR."

* When in London, it will be recollectcd, he was under extreme depression; at Exeter he was in a state of extreme excitement, and when in prison, prior and after

We have not found any evidence of his belonging to, or having any connexion with, the party who held the principles of the Ranters, although at the period of his weakness of intellect he was plied by some of these people, particularly women.*

his sentence, his conduct was very strange. Cromwell sent a person to see him in August, 1658; although he was told of the fact, and pressed to say anything which he wished Cromwell acquainted with, Naylor *was perfectly silent, and took no notice of him.*—See “Nichol’s ‘State Papers,’” p. 143, quoted in “Letters of Early Friends,” p. 54 (the date 1668 is incorrect). It was mentioned in the House of Commons, during the debate on Naylor, that a Mr. Sedgwick had been convicted of blasphemy by them, and was afterwards found to be insane, which tends to show that the idea of his being so had been suggested.—See “Burton’s Diary,” vol. i. p. 104.

* See Whitehead’s “Impartial Account,” &c., 1716. Rich was a Ranter. Doreas Erbury was the wife of Erbury the Seeker.

Baxter, in his Autobiography (part i., p. 77), informs his readers that the Quakers “were but the Ranters turned from horrid prophaneness and blasphemy to a life of extreme austerity.” The Ranters “did as much as ever anything did to disgrace all sectaries and to restore the credit of the (Presbyterian) ministry” and laity. “The Devil and the Jesuits” having found out that the Ranters “served not their turn,” took under his special patronage the Society of Friends! Among other things he charges upon them that “some of them have famished and drowned themselves in melancholy, and others under the power of the Spirit have attempted to raise them.” He, fortunately, by giving the particulars of the case, furnishes the means of fully vindicating the early Society, and Fox in particular, from having any connection with such doings or approving of them. Baxter says that “Susan Pierson” “did this at Claines, near Worcester, when they took a man out of his grave that had made away with himself, and commanded him to arise and live.” We learn from the “Swarthmore Papers,” that Fox was duly informed of this as a circumstance attributed to the Quakers in “the Newes Bookes,” and of what was the real state of the case.

The young man, some time after “being convinced,” *went out of his mind* and destroyed himself. “One, Mrs. Pierson, with another woman,” were the actors in this scene, and they evidently did not belong to the Society. Fox did not trouble himself with the matter, and merely rapidly endorses, in his own handwriting, on the letter giving him the information, “Mad whimesye.”—Thomas Willan to Margaret Fell. Swarthmore MSS.—no date—probably 1655.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XVII.

These reprints of tracts, published in 1650 and 1651, will serve to illustrate to the reader, more vividly than any description the author of this work can furnish—the mystical religious experience, and the line of thought which characterized the religionists described in the preceding pages as "Ranters."

He has given extracts from writers who appear to have been rational and able men. It would have been easy, however, to have given quotations which would show a fanaticism bordering upon insanity, while their more sober productions still bear the impress of the same current of thought, which bore its disciples into the vortex of the wildest antinomianism, and at last destroyed all respect for common morality. The reader will also understand more fully, the fascination which these erroneous views exercised, and the radical difference between the teaching of the "Ranters," and "the Children of the Light," who appeared later on the scene.

*of Jones
Tudall*

"**HEIGHTS IN DEPTHS, AND DEPTHS IN HEIGHTS; OR, TRUTH NO LESS SECRETLY THAN SWEETLY, SPARKLING OUT OF ITS GLORY," &c.**

By Jno. Salmon. London, 1651. British Museum, 270-E-1361.

Page 9.—When Mr. Salmon had arrived at the maturity of his natural understanding, he "received some quickenings of a divine principle within him;" he presently arose, and "as it were shook off his night-dresses," and "appeared to himself like the sun dawning out its resplendent splendor from behind the dark canopies of the earth." He forsook his own kindred and his father's house, and exposed himself to the reproach of the world, that he might own Christ and his people. First he became a Presbyterian; they appeared to him to "hover gently and soar sweetly," in a more sublime region than the Episcopal people. Then came Independency on the stage, a people far exceeding others in the strictness of their form. Then the doctrine of believer's Baptism. He became a Baptist preacher, braved persecution, and built a tabernacle. "Then came that voice from the throne of the Heavenly Almighty, arise and depart, for this is not your rest."

Page 13.—"I was made as truly sensible of this inwardly, as the eye is sensible of the light, or the ear of the outward sound. I was certainly struck dead to all my wonted enjoyments. Stript I was of my glory, and my crown taken from my head, and I could see nothing but vanity (and that legibly written) upon all my former travels. I then had a clear discovery in my spirit, how far all my former enjoyments came short of that true rest which my soul had all along aimed at. Here I stood for a season weeping with Mary at the sepulchre: fain I would have found Christ where I left

A few grave clothes, or such like stuff. him, but alas, he was risen. I found nothing in form but a few signals of mortality; as for Jesus, he was risen and departed. Thus have I followed Christ from his babeship or infancy, to his grave of mortality, running through the life form, in a bare knowledge of Christ after the flesh, till I expired with him into his death, and was sealed up in the grave of most dark and somnolent retires for a season. Loath, full loath I was, thus to shake hands with form, and to leave the terrestrial image of

As many of you as have been as baptized into Christ, have been baptized into his death. Jesus Christ; yet so it was designed that hee must goe to his Father, and (although I were ignorant of it) prepare a higher mansion in himself for me. When my 3 dayes (or set time) was expired, I begann to feele some quickening comfort within me; the gravestone was rolled away, and I set at libertie from these deep and darke retires;

Like the disciples, who were ignorant of the promise of the Spirit. out I came with a most serene and chearfull countenance, and (as one inspired with a supernaturall life) sprang up farr above my earthly centre, into a most heavenly and divine enjoyment. Wrapt up in the embraces of such pure love and peace, as that I knew not oftentimes whether I were in or out of this fading forme. Here I saw heaven opened upon me, and the new Jerusalem (in its divine brightness and corruscant beauty) greeting my soule by its humble and gentle descensions. Now I certainly enjoyed that substance, which all this while I had groped after in the shadow. My water was turned into wine; form into power, and all my former enjoyments being nothing in appearance to that glory which now rested on my spirit. Time would faile to tell what joy unspeakeable, peace unconceiveable, what soul-ravishing delights, and most divinely infatuating pleasures my soul was here possest with. I could cast my eye no where, but that presence of love presented it selfe to me, whose beatificall vision of times dazeled me into a sweet astonishment. In a word, I can give you no perfect account of that glory which then covered me; the lisps and slippes of my tongue will but render that imperfect, whose pure perfection surmounts the reach of the most strenuous and high-flown expression. I appeared to myselfe as one confounded into the abyss of eternitie, nonentitized into the being of beings, my soul spilt and emptied into the fountaine and ocean of divine fulness, expired into the aspires of pure life. In briefe, the Lord so much appeared, that I was little or nothing seen, but walked at an orderly distance from myself, treading and tripping over the pleasant mountains of the heavenly land, where I walked with the Lord and was not. I shall be esteemed a foole by the wise world, thorough an over much boasting, otherwise I could tell you how I have been exalted into the bosome of the eternall Almightiness, where

Viz., the carnal self. I have seene and heard things unlawful (I say unlawful) to be uttered amongst men; but I shall at present spare myself the labour, and prevent the world's inconsiderate censure.

As to the weakness of many. The proud and imperious nature of flesh would willingly claim a share in this glorious work, for which cause happened a sudain, certain, terrible, dreadfull revolution, a most strange vicissitude. God sent a thorn immediately, hid himself from me by a sudden departure, and gives a speedy commission to a messenger of Satan to assault me. The Lord being thus withdrawn, and having carried away (in the bundle

Note wel what I say, that was reserved pure in the life of Christ, while the flesh acted its part. of his treasures) the heart and life of that new seed in me, there now remained nought behind but the man of sinne, who (for his pride) being wounded with the thorn of divine vengeance, began by degrees to act its part." * * * * *

Here we leave Mr. Salmon, and beg the reader to notice the side notes.

“THE LIGHT AND DARK SIDE OF GOD; OR A PLAIN AND BRIEF DISCOURSE OF THE LIGHT SIDE—GOD, HEAVEN, AND EARTH; THE DARK SIDE—DEVIL, SIN, AND HELL. AS ALSO OF THE RESURRECTION AND SCRIPTURE. ALL WHICH ARE SET FORTH IN THE SEVERAL NATURES AND BEINGS, ACCORDING TO THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.”

Written by Jacob Bauthumley. London : Printed for William Larner, at the
“Black-more,” in Bishopsgate Street, 1650.)

“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to Babes; even so it is thy pleasure.”
“The spiritual man judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of none.”

Page 4.—“And, therefore, I cannot as I have carnally conceived, and as men generally do, that God hath His personal being and presence in one place more than another, or that He hath a simple, pure, glorious, and entire being circumscribed or confined in a place above the stars and firmament, which the men of the world call Heaven. And that all creatures here below are the products of that Being, and had their being of Him, and yet distinct from Him. But the spirit in me speaks otherwise, and saith I must not ascend up to Heaven to fetch Christ thence, nor descend into the depth to fetch him from thence; for the Word is even in you, which Word is God, and God is the Word.

Nay, I see that God is in all creatures, man and beast, fish and fowl, and every green thing, from the highest cedar to the ivy on the wall; and that God is the life and being of them all, and that God doth really dwell, and, if you will, personally, if he may admit so low an expression, in them all, and hath His Being nowhere else out of the creatures.

Further, I see that all the Beings in the world are but that one Being, and so He may well be said to be everywhere as He is, and so I cannot exclude Him from man or beast, or any other creature. Every creature and thing having that Being living in it, and there is no difference betwixt man and beast; but a man carries a more lively image of the Divine Being than any other creature. For I see the power, wisdom, and glory of God in one, as well as another, only in that creature called man God appears more gloriously in than the rest.

And truly, I find by experience, the grand reason why I have, and many others do now use set times of prayer, and run to formal duties, and other outward and low services of God: the reason hath been, and is, because men look upon God as being without them, and remote from them at a great distance, as if he were locally in Heaven, and sitting there only, and would not let down any blessing or good things, but by such and such a way and means.

But Lord, how carnal was I thus to fancy thee? Nay, I am confident that there is never a man under the sun that looks upon God in such a forme, but must be a gross idolator, and fancy some corporal shape of him, though they may call it spiritual.

Did men see that God was in them, and framing all their thoughts, and working all their works, and that he was with them in all conditions. What carnal spirit would reach out to that by an outward way, which spiritually is in Him, and which He stands really possessed of and which divine wisdom sees the best, and that things

can be no otherwise with Him? I shall speak my own experience herein, that I have made God mutable as myself, and, therefore, as things and conditions have changed, I thought that God was angry or pleased, and to have fallen a humbling myself; or otherwise, in thankfulness, never looking or considering that God is one entire, perfect, and immutable Being, and that all things were according to the council of His own will, and did serve the design of His own glory: but thought that my sins or holy walking did cause Him to alter His purpose of good or evil to me.

But now I cannot look upon any condition or action, but methinks there appears a sweet concurrence of the Supreme will in it; nothing comes short of it, or goes beyond it, nor any man shall do or be anything but what shall fall in a sweet compliance with it; it being the womb wherein all things are conceived, and in which all creatures were formed and brought forth.

Yea, further, there is not the least flower or herb in the field, but there is the Divine Being by which it is that which it is; and as that that departs out of it, so it comes to nothing, and so it is to-day clothed by God, and to-morrow cast into the oven. When God ceases to live in it, then it comes to nothing, and so all the visible creatures are lively resemblances of the Divine Being. But if this be so, some may say: 'Then look how many creatures there are in the world; there is so many Gods, and when they die and perish, then must God also die with them,' which can be no less than blasphemy to affirm.

To which I answer, and it is apparent to me, that all the creatures in the world, they are not so many distinct Beings, but they are but one intire Being, though they be distinguished in respect of their forms; yet their Being is but one and the same Being, made out in so many forms of flesh, as men and beast, fish and fowl, trees and herbs: for though these two last, trees and herbs, have not the life so sensibly or lively, yet it is certain there is a Life and Being in them, by which they grow to that maturity and perfection, that they become serviceable for the use of man, as other creatures are; and yet I must not exclude God from them; for as God is pleased to dwell in flesh, and to dwell with and in man, yet is He not flesh, nor doth the flesh partake of the Divine Being. Only this, God is pleased to live in flesh, and as the Scripture saith, He is made flesh, and He appears in several forms of flesh, in the form of man and beast, and other creatures, and when these have performed the design and will of God, that then as the flesh of man and other creatures come from the earth, and are not capable of knowing God, or partaking of the Divine nature, and God ceasing to live in them, and being gone out of them, that then they all shall return to their first principle of dust, and God shall, as he did from all eternity, live in Himself before there was a world or creatures: so he shall to all eternity live and enjoy Himself in Himself, in such a way as no man can utter; and so I see him yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever—the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of all things.

Page 52.—And to come to the point in hand, concerning a Hell hereafter, what it should be, or what should be tormented in it, I do not as yet apprehend; for the soul came pure, and is of the essence of God, could not be corrupted, and the body not capable of any impressions of God, and returns to its first principle of earth: so that unlesse you will imagine a Hell in God, which you would account blasphemy to speak, I cannot fancy or imagine any such Hell hereafter as men dreame of."

CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURE.

Page 71.—“If you take Scripture as it was written by the Prophets and Apostles, it is a form of wholesome words, a perfect rule for all outward actions, a true guide for a man’s outward conversation among men; the liveliest expression of the mind of God, of all other books; setting forth all conditions, estates, and enjoyments of all men in the world; it is the word in flesh.) The word was made flesh; it is the highest discovery of God in flesh, the truest testimony of God in the world. I do verily believe, that what pitch soever any man hath or can attain unto, but it is able to speak to him in it thus; it is in the letter, and the outside of it.

(But if you ask me what I make Scripture? I look upon it to be Spiritual, and so it is the Law written in the heart, and so it is spirit and life; as Christ saith, “the words that I speak are spirit and life;” so that what Christ speaks spiritually, that is Scripture, and so it is the power of God; for take Scripture as it is in the history, it hath no more power in the inward man than any other writings of good men, nor is it in that sense a discerner of the secrets as it is in the history, so it is to be believed above all other writings in the world but as it is a mystery, and God being the substance of it, so I must believe it as God makes it out in me. I must not build my faith upon it, or any saying of it, because such and such men write or speak so and so. But from that Divine manifestation in my own spirit, for the Scripture as it is written outwardly is but an outward witness of that which is within; and the spirituality of it wherein the life and being of it doth consist, is made out by a spiritual discovery. I do not go to the letter of Scripture to know the mind of God, but I, having the mind of God within, I am able to see it witnessed and made out in the letter: for if I do a thing lawful from the letter, yet if I be persuaded in my own spirit I should not do it, I sin. Yea, further, that power and authority which the Scripture hath, is not because such and such men write it, but from that Divine manifestation in them; and so indeed, if I have the same discovery that they had, then I can say it is the word of God, otherwise I lie; for it is one thing to believe the Scripture because such and such write it, as most men do; and it is another thing to believe it, because God saith so in me, and so it is the spiritual speaking of God that is Scripture, and so that is true.”)

CHAPTER XVIII.

INFLUENCE OF THE LINE OF THOUGHT OF THE RANTERS AND SEEKERS UPON THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. PEROTT. OPPOSITION TO FOX AND THE MINISTRY AS A DISTINCT OFFICE IN THE CHURCH. "THE SPIRIT OF THE HAT"—PENN ON "THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT." THE CONDUCT OF FOX UNDER PETTY OPPOSITION. STORY AND WILKINSON LEAD THE DISSATISFIED PARTY. THEY ADVOCATE THE "INDEPENDENCY OF CHURCHES." BARCLAY ENTERS THE LISTS WITH HIS "ANARCHY OF THE RANTERS." THE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT ADVOCATED IN THIS WORK. PENNINGTON AND LIVINGSTONE PRONOUNCE AGAINST THEM. THE SEPARATISTS DENOUNCE "OUTWARD TEACHERS," AND PLEAD THE SUFFICIENCY OF "THE INWARD TEACHER."

We will now proceed to describe the conflict of opinion between those who inclined to the views of the Seekers and Ranters, and those of Fox and the early preachers. This originated first in an opposition to the more complete organization of the ministry, which Fox manifested some anxiety to render as efficient as possible, and to the power and influence which Fox and the preachers who founded the Society exerted. And secondly, to the method and order which he wished to establish in the meetings for worship, and in the religious constitution or discipline of the Society.

As early as 1654, some traces of dissatisfaction with the proceedings of Fox existed. Objections were taken to the

preaching of able Ministers such as Howgill, as “words without power.”* The great influence of Fox was compared to that of the “Pope,” and that of the Ministers with the “Lord Bishops.” He was charged with taking upon himself “the place of God,” and “ordering those whom he accounted Ministers in his will,” and *sending* them “to the several meetings in and about London.” He also allowed the introduction in “our own meeting-houses” of things like to “pulpits!”† “A public stock was provided and ordered” for foreign evangelization, and this was another cause of complaint. A favourable time for the opposition of this party presented itself in 1663, when some of the most eminent Ministers of the Society were in prison, and the first paper which was circulated was from the pen of John Perrott, a man who had, in conjunction with a companion, John Luff, or Love, set out on a mission to Italy. They were taken into custody in Rome. J. Love died in the prison of the Inquisition,‡ but Perrott, with great discrimination, was sent to the *prison for lunatics*, § and was allowed still to address his effusions, in the shape of letters, to his friends in England, who appear to have kept him informed of the state of things at home. He was greatly pitied by these friends, and doubtless it was considered best that he should have the credit of making the first objection to the proceedings of Fox. Fox had given instruction, that in the meetings of Friends, all the worshippers should uncover the head in prayer, and that the order, either of reverently *standing*, as among the Presbyterians,

* “Swarthmore Papers,” 1655.

† This no doubt refers to the provision of standing places, or galleries, for the Ministers.

‡ See “Ellwood’s Life,” p. 254. London, 1714.

§ Ellwood says Perrott went with the idea of converting the Pope!

or of *kneeling*, as among the Episcopalian, was to be adopted. Perrott, in his epistle, takes the ground that because “the world” had the custom of *taking off* their hats and prayed standing, that such “customs and traditions were not to be followed, and that since there was Scriptural precedent for falling down on the face and taking the shoes from off the feet, that if any one was “moved” to pray thus, why should *he* not do so?

The next pamphlet which was issued* in the controversy gives clear evidence of the character of the movement. It alludes in figurative language to the persecution then raging, comparing it to a flood, and the church to the ark, and recommends the church “to stand still” till it was abated. “As there was a time of bringing all home, so let there be a time of keeping at home, and so every one to sit down under his own vine and quietly to enjoy the fruit of his labour.” In a word, they had had enough of the vigorous evangelistic action of Fox and his friends. The Society was now no longer to “*take delight*, as some have done, in the *greatness of its numbers.*”† The noble stand taken by the Society in insisting on their right publicly to worship God, and regularly to meet at certain times on Sundays and week-days, was to be exchanged for far more spiritual views. No one was to act “outwardly” further than he saw “inwardly.” The writer had, he said, “an high esteem for meetings,” but if he found “drawings,” “movings,” to “go to a meeting,” he would go; but

* “Some *Breathings of Life from a Naked Heart*, presented in love to the honest and upright and single-hearted. That they with me may wait and feel the immediate drawings and leadings of the Holy Spirit in all things, or come to know the state which the Apostle speaks of, to have the anointing to teach them all things, or of all things that cometh from Christ, God’s Anointed, so that they need not any man to teach them.” 1 John ii. 27. By William Salt, 1663.

† Crisp, on “Pennington’s Testimony,” p. 13.

to go in his “*own will or time*,” or in that of any other person, he could not do it lest it should be said to him, “Who hath required this of your hands?” Thus, “when Friends have provided a meeting-house,” it “may be made use of when they feel *stirrings in the Life* both with respect to *time and place!*” “The Spirit was not to be tied up to man’s conveniency.”

We have here the inroads of the Quietism of the Seekers combined with the views of the Ranters, which struck at the root of all Church order. The party holding these views pleaded the liberty of the Spirit and the right of private judgment. The question may seem a frivolous one, when the practical issue was confined to the question whether these men were to join with their brethren in a reverent and becoming posture in public prayer, but it was really a difference of principle which involved far-reaching consequences. The early Friends had cried down the forms of worship, ecclesiastical arrangements and ministry of others, and now were they not in the same position?* Their own form of worship, ministry, and church discipline were now decried, and the witness of the Spirit in each individual was declared to be the rule, and to be the rule on each particular occasion what a man should do who joined in church fellowship. The church could not have church officers because, e.g., a Minister preaching, or praying, or performing any other act as a church officer (whether or not a majority of the Church had agreed that he was evidently called to the Ministry and endowed with gifts both of grace and of nature for the service), was only to be recognized at the

* G. Fox held that if they had the word and power of God they would uphold “*all true forms.*” “The Word and Power gives a *form* and being to all things.”—Paper by G. F., Devonshire House.

moment when he said or did anything of which any individual hearer might have an impression or motion of God's spirit approving it, entirely apart from whether what was said or done was in accordance with the letter and spirit of the New Testament, and with what was the united judgment of the Church as to the interpretation and plain meaning of the Holy Scriptures. The Leaders of the Society were denounced as inconsistent with their ancient principles, and were now, it was said, leading the people back again to the spiritual Egypt; and it was declared that there was no standing place between their own position and that of the Roman Church.* To show how peculiarly seductive the character of this movement was to men who had been protesting against the State Ministry and every ecclesiastical arrangement of the Established Church, whether Presbyterian or Episcopalian, even Ellwood, the pupil of Milton, confesses that he was caught in the snare. At first sight, he says, it seemed suitable to "a spiritual dispensation." They made "a specious pretence and show of greater spirituality," and he was betrayed by it, and at a meeting which was appointed for the object of recovering these wandering sheep, he eventually made a public confession of his error.†

We have previously shown that the opposition of the founders of the Society of Friends to Independent and Baptist Ministers, was only to them in their character of

* In 1666, was issued "a Testimony from the Brethren who were met together in London, in the Third Month, 1666, to be communicated to the faithful Friends and Elders in the Counties, and by them to be read at their several meetings," was sent throughout England against "those who speak evil of dignities and despise governments, without which we are sensible our Societies and Fellowship cannot be holy and inviolable," against those who, "under the pretence of keeping down man and forms," cry down the ministry and meetings."

† See page 225 of his Life.

State Ministers. (To the Presbyterian Ministry they had in addition other objections. The Founders of the Society were charged, as early as 1654, with opposition to the Ministry as a *distinct office in the Christian Church*, and it is important to note the clear manner in which they asserted the contrary. Richard Farnsworth* says, in reply to this charge:—"He that is a Bishop, Pastor, or Teacher, and is taught by the Spirit, who is not of man (*i.e.*, appointed by the temporal power) but of God, and is blameless and doth contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; who are not carnal, but spiritual, &c., and are *governed* by the Spirit of God," "such we do own." Again, John Pendarves† asks whether the people called Quakers "declaring against instrumental teaching, and yet instructing themselves" and others, "did not "manifest a contradiction between their professed principles and practice;" and "whether they consider *instrumental teaching* to be unsuitable to the New Covenant: and if so, why Christ, being ascended, appointed pastors and teachers in the Church?" He is thus replied to:—"Those who go from place to place instructing others," they do not declare against, but "those that sat at home and let men into carnal ordinances." They do not, they say, deny "*instrumental*," but "*traditional* teaching."

On the other hand, the party which was now rising into notice were *opponents of instrumental teaching* and the authority

* "Light risen out of Darkness," p. 49, 1654.

† "Arrows against Babylon," p. 42, London, 1656. Pendarves was a Baptist, and held very similar views to the early Friends, whom he commends for their endeavour after "reformation in Saints' apparel," and evidently asked questions with a desire for information. Pendarves was one of those who went up and down preaching in houses, barns, under hedges, trees, and elsewhere," and obtained "a great multitude of disciples."

of "pastors" and "teachers,"* and held that less of vocal service was required, not more.†

In a work written by Barclay in 1670, entitled, "Truth Cleared of Calumnies," he exhibits the ground taken by the founders of the Society, with his usual clearness. He says,† those called Quakers "grant that there *are* Ministers and Pastors in the church. They do *not* affirm that the ministry is *common to all*, but that there be some Pastors and Teachers, yet that hinders not that any at a time may speak, for it is *one thing to be particularly called to the ministry, and another to be moved to speak at a particular time.*" In other words, that a vital distinction existed between the regular ministry and the occasional prophesying of a church member. He defines also that the objection to the Presbyterian ministry is that "the whole *esse*, or being of it, *may be without saving grace, or true holiness, you expressly affirming that holiness is not necessary*, and that a minister of the gospel ought to be received and heard, though he have not the least grace or holiness.† In the same way George Whitehead, one of the most eminent founders of the Society, says in the same controversy, that this party are "mistaken in *taking the whole course of preaching* to be that '*prophesying*' intended that is brought in with '*praying*,' for **ALL** preaching *cannot be that entire and peculiar 'prophesying,'* which, when one

* "A Real Demonstration of the *True Order* in the Spirit of God," &c., p. 55, 1663.
"So Friends, this is the counsel of the Lord God unto you; *make nothing to yourselves* (i.e., do not have any such church officers, &c.) but *wait in stillness and quietness, not out of words only, but also out of thoughts and imaginations*, for then all flesh comes to silence." It was said that some of the preachers associated with Fox had said in reply to those who "did not see" various matters of this kind: "If you do not *see yourselves, follow us* who do!"

† Page 57.

‡ Page 59. See also Baxter's "Cure of Church Divisions," p. 114. A man "may perform the office of a Minister to the benefit of the Church, though he have no saving grace at all."

is immediately called to, I grant it is most comely to stand up with the hat off.”*

This stage of the controversy was brought to a point, by the publication of a pamphlet, in 1673, with the curious title of “The Spirit of the Hat, or the Government of the Quakers among themselves, as it hath been exercised by George Fox, and other leading men, in their Monday or Second-day’s Meeting” (*i.e.*, Ministers’ meeting at Devonshire House), &c. This was mainly written by a person of the name of William Mucklow, who eventually was “recovered *to a better mind and to be more* in charity with Friends.” It was a severe critique on the course which things were taking in the Society, under the guidance of Fox and others. The question of the hat being removed during public prayer is treated as the commencement of a formal worship. George Fox was now saying “believe as the church believes,” and so said the Papists. There were Elders, he says, in the church “who will not have the Lord’s *people* prophets.” If this were not so, “what meaneth it that certain persons are appointed to spend *their whole time* in speaking in every meeting, and all the rest to come as hearers, neglecting the gift in themselves, waiting on their lips.” By the regular or travelling Ministers now preaching “long declarations,” or teaching sermons in this systematic manner, the exercise of “prophecy,” *i.e.*, the preaching of other members of the Church, was being “discouraged” and “stopt.”† The Ministers also, instead of the humble garb in which many had before preached, had in a short space

* “The Apostate Incendiary Rebuked,” p. 30. By G. Whitehead, 1673. The Independents and others preached with the hat on.—“Baillie’s Letters,” 45, p. 440.—The inference is clear, that in exercising the gift of teaching, the hat was kept on, and in “prophesying” it was taken off.

† See p. 20, “Spirit of the Hat,” 1673.

of time got into “rich habits, to wit, beaver hats, camlet cloaks, and the finest of the cloth,” not inferior to that worn by “Merchants of the City.” “The *Assemblies* of the true Church,” he says, “are all equal, and therefore the Friends of one place cannot say they have the power over Friends of another place.” “Christ in *each Assembly* is the Head.” The new movement was, therefore, now asserting the absolute *independency* of *each Church* as well as the independency of each individual. Their leaders, however, were not prepared to advocate more than a limited independency of Churches, and thus the question did not assume the prominence it deserved. This called forth “The Spirit of Alexander the Coppersmith lately revived,” by William Penn, 1673. Penn goes to the root of the matter, when he says* that, “either there is such a thing as a Christian Society, or there is not.” If *not*, then there is an end of all argument, but if there is any Christian “body, Church, or Society,” it must have church “power” of some kind. “Deny this,” says Penn, “and farewell to all Christian church order and discipline,” and it is “an inlet to Ranterism and so to Atheism.”† The “liberty of the spirit” did not consist in our all being “moved to do contrary things,” but is shown in the united disposition of a Church to “abide in the order of the Gospel.”‡ The assertion that “every member” of the Church “is equal,” and that, therefore, no greater power exists in the Eldership or approved Ministers of the Church, is an error, because although belonging to “the same body,” all are not called to “the *same service*,” and some members are “more honourable than others”—“preaching the everlasting Gospel in season and out of season, rising early and lying

* Page 8. † Page 9. ‡ Penn’s “Judas and the Jews,” &c., 1673.

down late, suffering, travelling and spending and being spent, in body and estate, sacrificing the joy, strength, and pleasure of their youth to the service of the living eternal God, and the salvation of people's souls," entitles them to our consideration. And with regard to the objection that the Ministers "are not judged by the laity, but by their peers," he replies that they are judged by the laity ("as he wickedly distinguishes") in all matters as between one Christian and another, but that strictly in "cases which concern the *exercise of the Ministry* it is most reasonable" that the travelling Ministers and Elders, or fixed Ministers, should be the judges.*

This party, who opposed Fox, Penn, and the other Ministers who founded the Society, contended that "in the Apostles' days (there) were Pastors, Teachers, Elders, &c., but in *this day* the *Spirit itself* is the Pastor, Teacher, Elder, &c." As, therefore, from time to time the Spirit moved certain persons to preach, so the answer of the Spirit "moving" the hearer to approve what is spoken, constitutes the preacher "for the moment" an Elder, Apostle, Teacher,† &c. Fox undoubtedly exercised an authority very similar in kind, but less perhaps in degree, to that of Wesley in the societies he founded. It was an authority justly due to his indefatigable labours for the good of others. Great efforts were now made to discredit his motives, charging him with ambition, and that his efforts for the establishment of a complete system of Church government‡ were in order to increase his influence. Under these painful circumstances his religious character

* "Alexander the Coppersmith," p. 12.

† "The Testimony of George Bishop in 1666," quoted with approval by T. Crisp.

‡ It was said that the Society should attend to "heavenly drawings" rather than to G. F.'s "comely orders."

shone brighter and brighter to the last. While some of his eminent supporters used in the heat of controversy weapons of sarcasm and invective which, without injury to their cause, might have been well spared, Fox, in his energetic labours for the restoration of peace and unity, used his influence with persons who had violated every sense of honour, with true Christian gentleness, and touchingly appealed to their better feelings* in vindicating his motives. Curious insight is incidentally given in the course of the controversy, into Fox's methods of proceeding. His adversaries complain that he sent his tracts and papers against their party into the *very prisons*.† A specimen is given of one of his pastoral epistles, probably rapidly written and sent to some congregation where the worldly fashions of the time of Charles the Second were prevailing in the very assemblies of the people called Quakers, and discomfited the mind of Fox. The tone of it is peremptory and decisive, and might well have been excused, considering the great difficulty which all religious reformers have experienced, when they have given what they have deemed sound Christian advice on the style of

* See MS. "Unpublished Letters and Papers of G. Fox in the Records of Bristol Meeting, particularly one dated 4th of Eleventh Month, 1678, to Wm. Rodgers:—"Ah, William and the rest! this work of yours has not been of God. Therefore, lay it aside, if you love your eternal peace. Much I could write if there were an ear without prejudice. And, whatever you say of me, I heed it not, for I know what I have been and what I am to the Lord, and how he has preserved me to this day." In another place he also breaks away from the thread of his letter: "Ah, William, let truth sway thy passion. Thou threatens me with *printing*. Thou must not think to *fear me with threats*, for that will do thee no good when thou hast done it, nor give ease to that disquieted, restless spirit. . . . Thou hadst better buy the peaceable truth to lay the tempest in thee . . . and come down with humility to thy first love." The correspondence must be read fully to appreciate the true greatness of mind of Fox under the severest test which perhaps can be applied to a man, viz., petty opposition and unfair dealing.

† MS. Paper in the British Museum.

dress which is adopted from time to time by the gentler sex, contrary to the dictates of personal comfort and common sense : “ Away with your *long slit peaks behind* in the skirts of your waistcoats,” your “ *skimming dish hats*,” “ unnecessary buttons,” “ short sleeves,” “ short black aprons,” “ vizzards;” “ your great *needless flying scarfs like colours on your backs!*” This was given as a specimen of what was termed a “ Bull” of this gentle and estimable man. A word from Fox occasionally suspended or re-instated members. Fox encouraged the members cordially to *shake hands* with each other when they met, and this method of greeting appears to have savoured too much of formality for some of them.*

Hitherto the leaders of the party had not been men of mark, and the subject-matter of their objections was in some cases frivolous; but now two who had been the early coadjutors of Fox, and also eminent Ministers, John Story, and John Wilkinson, appeared at the head of the objectors. They commenced their ministry, and joined Fox, about 1654. We learn from the archives of the Independent Church at Cockermouth (which, in 1652, had become so numerous that a branch was formed at Broughton), that some of the congregations became inclined to Baptist principles, but the Church at Broughton “ began to be generally shaken, most of them inclining to Quakerism.”

On “ the 16th of the Fourth Month, 1654, that deluge of errors that had overflowed the county, had quite shattered in pieces the other congregations about Broughton, and

* T. Crisp’s “ Testimony Concerning Isaac Pennington,” p. 23, 1051. “ Your manner of greeting each other?” This is explained to be G. F.’s advice for Friends—“ taking one another by the hand.”

In Harwood’s MSS., in British Museum, p. 13, he says he “ would not bow to such a form of external practice as *wringing* each other *hand* by the *hand*!”



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only some few of the people have come to land and kept together in communion." John Wilkinson, the pastor of the church, departed with most of his hearers to the Quakers, to his great shame and infamy. The Lord at last convince him of his sin! Amen, Amen, Amen." This was the commencement of Wilkinson's career as a preacher associated with Fox. We learn that afterwards the Independent church at Broughton "arrived at a more healthy state."^{*} The ministry of Story† and Wilkinson had been eminently successful in Bristol and in Wiltshire, as well as in the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland; and their cause was strongly supported by a wealthy merchant of Bristol, named William Rodgers, who was an active and influential member of that important church. In London, Charles Harris, a well-educated and somewhat fluent minister, supported their views. Story and Wilkinson shifted the controversy, to some extent, from the independency of individuals to the independency of churches. They did not object to the association of churches in monthly and quarterly district meetings, "for the necessary service of truth,"[†] provided that they were strictly representative; but they objected to persons from distant churches forming part of any other church for church purposes, and also on the same principle to the central synod or Yearly Meeting lately established by Fox. They asserted that "judgment of truth," given forth by "any *part* of the members of Christ's body," ought not to "become a bond" upon any

* "History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England," by David Douglas, of Hamsterley, London, 1846, pp. 15 and 16.

† Story had preached in "public assemblies" "in Westmoreland," &c., "at the age of 14 years."

‡ "Two Questions Proposed," by J. W. and J. S., to Friends of the Meeting at Drawell. Vol. of Tracts, lxix. 37. Devonshire House Library.

other part of the said body, “further than their understandings are illuminated;” in other words, further than those parts of Christ’s body or particular churches approved. They contended that the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings should consist ONLY of representatives from the particular meetings, that the travelling Ministers (public labourers of the gospel) furnished with a certificate from distant churches, should not be allowed to sit as members of these meetings for the transaction of the affairs of particular or associated churches, unless it was “to tell their message and immediately to depart.” It was said that in earlier times, nothing was so much desired as the assistance of the ministers, but now when they came from a distance to these church meetings, the Story and Wilkinson party asked them, “Will you do our business, or will you *leave it to us to do?** While, on the other side, Fox and Barclay contended that “*all* who in a true sense may be reckoned of the Church, “might be present and give their judgment;”† and this contrary view of Story and Wilkinson is reprobated by the Yearly Meeting, as “*a plain independency* from the life and practice of the church throughout the world.”‡

Story and Wilkinson objected strongly to “Women’s Meetings in the country districts, and separate from the men;” and still more to the “accomplishing of marriage under that way, form, and order George Fox directed,” and

* MS. by J. Blaykling and others, p. 16.

† The “Teachers,” “Elders,” and a “plurality” of the Church “might decide.” See Barclay’s “Anarchy of the Ranters,” section viii., p. 56. (Reprint). Irwin’s Edition. Manchester, 1868.

‡ MSS. at Bristol, being a Letter from a meeting held at Ellis Hookes, his chamber in London, 12th of Fourth Month, 1677, and signed by 67 Friends, and it is directed to be read in Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. (This was a letter of the Yearly Meeting of 1677.)

particularly to the parties about to be married appearing before the *Women's Meeting*, to declare their intentions, which they deemed unnecessary. G. Fox, they alleged, did not do this in the case of his own marriage, and now he wished to impose the custom upon all the churches. They objected to the principle laid down in Barclays "Anarchy of the Ranters," which "the Second-day's morning Meeting in London, by approving Robert Barclay's book," had endorsed, that these new assemblies, which were termed "*the church*," should take upon them the jurisdiction of "taking up and composing differences as to outward things,"* since it was obvious that Christ himself refused to take† any such power; and if it were asserted that this was merely by consent of the parties differing, it could be truly said that even a heathen man could claim such power if it were given him by the consent of the two parties as an umpire or arbitrator, and they held that the church had no such power given it by God, but that its jurisdiction was confined solely to *spiritual* as opposed to purely temporal matters.‡

(It was in the year 1676, that Robert Barclay, the author of the "Apology," wrote a short treatise in answer to these views on church government, which were being propagated apparently with no small success. This work was approved (as before stated) by the Second-day's Morning Meeting in London (representing the ministers of the Society),§ and

* See "Barclay's Anarchy, &c.," section v. p. 27. Irwin's edition.

† See Luke xii., verses 13, 14.

‡ Barclay replied (page 240 of his works) that he "did not ascribe an absolute jurisdiction over men's property in outward things" to these meetings, but only meant that the scandal of Christians going to law should be avoided, by the voluntary submission of their disputes to their brethren.

§ See minute, p. 249 of Barclay's folio works.

from it we obtain a clear statement of the principles involved on either side. In the preface he states that there are “so great pretenders to *inward motions and revelations of the Spirit*, that there are no extravagancies which they will not cloak with it,” and he associates the *Ranters* with the *German Anabaptists*, as “some more moderate of *that kind* called Ranters.” He commences by recounting the wonderful success of the preaching of the ministers who founded the Society, and states that “innovators” have arisen, bringing in new doctrines and practices, differing, and *contrary to, their (i.e., the ancient Ministers') preaching*,” and are “reviling the apostles and messengers of Christ, the Elders of the Church,”* who loved not their lives unto the death, but who, through much care, travel and watchings, “gathered by the mighty power of God.” God had “laid care upon *some beyond others*,” to watch for the souls of the brethren, and under such leaders the Society was “gathered, and was gathering into good order and discipline.”

These innovators, says he, preach up “a higher dispensation,” and opposed this order and government, saying that they were “taught to follow the Light in their consciences, and not the orders of men.” Some were “afraid of the very *name* of ‘a church,’ ” and the very words “order and government.” He then proceeds regularly to prove, that from the rise of the Christian church, it has had an internal government, and that this is exercised by those whom Christ sends forth as “apostles, messengers, elders, and teachers,” and by whom the church is gathered. To *these* persons the principal government of the church rightly appertains. To them is confided the “care and oversight” of the flock, “a certain *authority*,” also to bring back the straying sheep.)

* See pages 353, 354, for the origin of these appellations.

It is for the highest good of the church that such persons should "appoint," and even "*command*," such things as are "needful for peace and unity." The reciprocal duty and "obligation" of the church towards its ministers, is "to reverence, honour, and obey such as are set over them in the Lord" (p. 17), and the limit of their authority only extends to them as officers of the church, to carry out what "the Lord leads us to by His Spirit." The church being a living body instinct with the Spirit of Christ, it is led to believe the doctrines and principles of the truth, and to hold and maintain them *as they were delivered by the apostles of Christ in the Holy Scriptures;*"* not according to the bare letter of Holy Scripture, but according to its real spirit and intention, and the question of church government, or no church government, is decided by the fact that it was "the practice of the saints and church of old." Who are the members of the Church of Christ? They are those who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints." This "Church of Christ" may be made up of divers gatherings or churches in several countries or nations. He affirms boldly that, *so far forth* as a church retains the "nature and essence of the true church," "a true judgment" and even "an infallible judgment, will never be wanting." This is the true solution of the controversy respecting the infallibility of the Church. It is not an infallibility necessarily annexed to any *person*, *persons*, or *places*, by virtue of any office or station in the body of Christ, "but resides in every true Church." The distinction between a true and a false church is, that in a true church none are admitted to be members but such as

* See quotation from Penn, to show that the early Society held Holy Scripture to be their "creed," p. 573.

are led and guided by the Holy Spirit. “None ought, nor can be accounted the Church of Christ, but such as are in a measure *sanctified, or sanctifying* by the grace of God, and led by His Spirit; nor yet any made officers in the church, but by the grace of God and inward revelation of His Spirit.”

The condition of the infallible guidance of “such a church is not annexed to the bare visible profession,” but to a church consisting of members in whom exists a “*real effectual* work of sanctification and regeneration, and the *new creature* brought forth in the heart.” Among the Friends, all who “in *true sense* may be reckoned of the church, may be present and give their judgment.” The author considers that, although they do not always decide by a bare majority, it is better if the “teachers, elders, and plurality should decide.” With regard to the *objects* of such a church, their first object is, he considers, to “propagate” the gospel as they understand it; their second object is, to have a certain “care and oversight over each other, and prevent and remove all occasions which may break their conjunct interest, “whether by disunion among themselves,” or by wicked men banding themselves together to undo, destroy, or defame them; and thirdly, to remove everything which will hinder the propagation of the Gospel. The authority of such a church only extends to those who “have declared and do declare themselves members; who believe and profess the same doctrines, and go under the same distinction and denomination,” and therefore it cannot be compared to the authority of a hierarchy supported by the State power, or to be objected to as a species of persecution. The Society of Friends is not “so foolish” as to concern itself “with those who are *not of us.*” Its care for those that are without their church has been manifested, in that

the Society "as a church, with a tender regard for the good of their immortal souls," with a "zeal" for "God's glory," and "for the exaltation and propagation of His everlasting truth and Gospel," has "not been wanting with the hazard of our lives to seek the scattered ones, holding forth the living and sure foundation, and inviting and persuading all to obey the Gospel of Christ, and to take notice of his reproofs, as he makes himself manifest in and by his light in their hearts." Towards those "that are without," its object is to bring them into the "fellowship of the saints," and when brought into the church, that they may not "again fall into the temptation of the enemy." The principle of being immediately led by the Holy Spirit, does not involve the abandonment of the use of means; for example, set times for divine worship, and for the ministry of the gospel, for the meeting of the "elders" and the flock, nor for the appointment of "deacons," nor for the contributions of the church, these being at a set time as in the early church. As to outward things, widows and orphans are under the care of the church; and there is to be "no beggar in Israel."

With regard to the composing of differences, although the Courts of Law are not exactly "unbelievers" in the sense in which the Apostle uses the word, still, in a certain sense, they are unbelievers in much the Society believes to be the truth of God, and therefore he thinks that the practice of the "saints giving judgment" on outward differences is salutary, and the advantage will soon be so self-evident that "the nation will be eased and disburdened of that deceitful tribe of *lawyers* (as well as priests) who by their many tricks and endless intricacies have rendered justice in their method burdensome to honest men, and seek not so much to put an end as to foment controversies and contentions, that

they themselves may still be fed and their trade kept up." With regard to matters spiritual; in matters of conscience, in minor matters the members are to bear with one another. In larger matters, those who "contradict any of the fundamental articles on which the Society was contracted, dissolve the original bond, and have forfeited their right in the Society, and the church has power to hold to what it deems to be right, and to declare and pronounce a judgment. In cases of doubt it has a right to refer the matter to a central Synod, as the church at Antioch did in apostolic times. Still *there is a bond of union "more inward and invisible,"* by which the Society of Friends "have unity with all who have the life of righteousness," although they belong not to any outward church, and although "their understandings are not yet so enlightened" as to belong to the Society of Friends.*

This was the substance of Barclay's able and closely-reasoned treatise in defence of the church system established by Fox. The danger in which the Society was placed, may be judged of by the fact, that there were few eminent men belonging to it who do not take their part in this controversy, and that considerably over one hundred pamphlets were printed during its continuance.

Isaac Pennington, from his tendency to mystical views, was supposed to sympathise with them, and was appealed to in Aylesbury prison.† He pronounced against the new

* Rodgers was summoned by the Second-day's Morning Meeting for misrepresenting the meaning of Barclay's "Anarchy, &c." before he had communicated his objections to Barclay. Rodgers withdrew his objections and was recommended to destroy his MSS. and all other copies. They suggested to Barclay that some terms or expressions in his book might be made more "easy and familiar," and recommended him to write an explanatory postscript, which gave rise to his "Vindication of the Anarchy of the Ranters."

† Some Queries concerning the Order and Government of the Church of Christ.—Date probably 1670.

party. "Christ had appointed spiritual order and government to be in his church and congregation," and it was right that "the body and common members of the churches" were to hearken to the "Pastors, Overseers, and Bishops," "such as watch for the soul—such as not only lay the foundation but carry on the building to perfection." Their duty was "*to obey them in the Lord, to submit to this Ministry.*" This was not a turning away from the guidance of the Spirit, because "God had set up the measure of life in him that hearkeneth."

Patrick Livingstone, an eminent Scotch Minister of the Society, informs* us that they said, "Let all flesh be silent," and that "they needed not any man to teach them;" and he asks, "why then they attempt to teach others both by word and writing?" The text quoted was only applicable to a Church teaching by persons who had "not come to the anointing," but these people applied it so as to "forbid *the anointing, to edify the Church!*"

It is obvious that one of the most important points in the movement, was an opposition to the introduction by Fox of a more regular and teaching ministry. It became more and more evident that congregations could not thrive on silent prayer alone, and prophecy in the sense of a few words dropped by way of exhortation and encouragement, or personal experience, and therefore there is an emphasis placed on the one side on *Christ* being a sufficient "teacher," and that they needed not "*outward*" teachers; and on the other side to the fact that "Christ, when he ascended up on high, gave "*outward teachers*" to his Church.† On one side it was urged, that "a motion, or command from

* "Plain and Downright Dealing," London, 1667.

† See Ellwood's "Rogero Mastix," p. 11.

the Spirit," was required for *all things we do* in a church capacity; on the other, it was answered by Penn that we are bound to "do all to the praise and glory of God," and we were not "to wait for a motion of the Spirit for everything."*

* "A Brief Examination and State of Liberty, Spiritual, &c." London, 1681, pp. 2 and 3.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE STORY AND WILKINSON PARTY OPPOSE SINGING, WHILE FOX AND BARCLAY ACKNOWLEDGE IT TO BE A PART OF DIVINE WORSHIP. THE SINGING OF THE "GENERAL BAPTISTS." THE RISE OF "CONGREGATIONAL SINGING" AT GENEVA. ITS INTRODUCTION INTO ENGLAND. ORGANS AND CATHEDRAL SINGING. STERNHOLD AND HOPKINS' PSALMS. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING IN NEW ENGLAND. ITS RISE AMONG THE INDEPENDENTS AND BAPTISTS. THEIR OBJECTIONS TO THE SINGING OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. HYMN TUNE PUBLISHED BY SEWEL. MARGARET FELL ENCOURAGES SINGING. THE SEPARATION TAKES PLACE. ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATION AT DRAWELL AND BRISTOL. MEETING HOUSES SEIZED BY THE SEPARATISTS. THE CONTROVERSY TURNED OVER TO ELLWOOD. THE "RHYMING SCOURGE" AND "ROGERO-MASTIX." MISSIONARY EFFORT AND A TEACHING MINISTRY CONDEMNED BY THE SEPARATISTS. THE "RANTER" AND "SEEKER" CONGREGATIONS DISAPPEAR.

WE here break off from the thread of the history, to remark that singing, as well as prayer and preaching, appears to have been acknowledged by G. Fox and his coadjutors to be a part of Divine worship, from the commencement of their religious movement, while the carrying out of this practice in public worship, was opposed by the Story and Wilkinson party. In a very early tract, without date,* the question is

* "The Moderate Enquiry Resolved." Written on behalf of the Brethren, &c., by W. C. (W. Caton).

asked: "But, as touching their worship, read they ? sing they ? or pray they in their meetings ?" It is answered : "And as for singing and praying, they do them both with the Spirit and with the understanding," but the formal singing and praying of the *world* (that is, unbelievers) they deny."* In 1670, Barclay, in "Truth cleared of calumnies," says—"that singing is a part of God's worship and is warrantably performed amongst the saints, is a thing denied by no Quaker so-called, and it is not unusual among them, and that at times David's words may be used as the Spirit leads thereunto." Their objection to the singing in churches is, that a "mixed multitude known to be drunkards, swearers, &c., &c.," sing, and that indifferently, all descriptions of psalms. Some, he says, are unsuitable to sing, and would "cause our worship to be a lie." It is obvious that the singing alluded to was precisely similar to that of the General Baptists, which was that of a single person, and is described thus by one of their most eminent writers :— "That such persons as God hath gifted to tell forth His mighty acts and recount His special providences, and upon whose hearts God put a lively sense of present mercies, should have liberty and convenient opportunity to celebrate the high praises of God *one by one* in the churches of God, and that, with such words as the nature of the matter and present occasion requires, so that they be careful to keep to the language of the sacred word, and as near as may be to the methods of those hymns and psalms used before

* "Testimony against Gaming, Musick, Dancing, Singing, Swearing, and people calling upon God to damn them. Commended to the consciences of all people in the sight of God, but especially to those that keep public-houses."—A poster or fly sheet, by John Kelsall. York Library, 1682. "God did and doth own singing in the Spirit under the dispensation, of the Gospel, but the singers that God doth own under the Gospel dispensation, are those who are first taught by Him to mourn for, repent of, and forsake their sins; such in the Spirit may sing as it moves and leads them."

Him by holy writers of the Scriptures. And that all this be done with a cheerful voice, that may seem to express the joys conceived in the heart of him that singeth, the better to affect the hearts of the congregation. . . . Thus he that hath a psalm becomes a useful minister in the House of God, whilst others wait on their gifts, whether it be praying, teaching, exhortation," &c. They disapproved all elaborate or musical singing with a multitude of voices in rhyme or meter, and that such singing inferred 'that no church was complete in the order of God's worship without some skill in poetry and music.'"^{*} That this had been their practice from the year 1609, may be seen by referring to pp. 106, 107, and 108.

The practice of singing with "conjoint voices," or modern congregational singing, is a strictly Protestant practice. "The Goostly Psalms and Spiritual Songes" of Coverdale are said to have been condemned to the flames in 1539.[†] It was introduced into Scotland by John Knox. The congregations of English exiles formed at Geneva in 1555, adopted the principles of psalmody which were established at Geneva.[‡] From the Book of Common Orders, or directory of public worship, adopted in Scotland (Edition 1556), we find it directed that "the people singe a psalme all together in a playne tune." They are directed in the "First Book of Discipline," 1560, to "exercise themselves in the psalmes," so that they may be "more abill togither with common heart and voice to prayse God." The meaning of "playne

* Book ii. chap. viii., p. 110, " Grantham's Christianismus Primitivus," London, 1678.

† Coverdale wished "that neither our carters and ploughmen had any other thing to whistle upon but save psalms, hymns, and such godly songs, as David is occupied withal."

‡ The exiles at Frankfort agreed that the people were to sing a ,salm in metre, in a plain tune, as is accustomed in the French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, and Scotch Churches.—See " Brief Discourse, &c," respecting the troubles at Frankfort.

song" is shown in a report of Cranmer to Henry VIII. upon the translating the liturgy into English. "The song made thereunto should not be so full of notes, but as near as may be for every syllable a note, that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly." It was not to be "the quavering, operose music which is called figured." The Puritan party, as early as 1536, carried a protestation to the King in the lower House of Convocation, which styles "the playing at the organyes a foolish vanity," and various attempts were made to effect their removal, one of which failed by a single vote. In 1586, the Puritans proposed "that all cathedral churches may be put down where the service of God is grievously abused by piping with organs, singing, ringing and trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to another." But this (the Antiphon) was distinct from congregational singing. This was first permitted by Edward VI. in the English Church, in 1541. He enacted that "it shall be lawful for all men, as well in churches, chapels, oratories, or other places, to use openly any psalm or prayer *taken out of the Bible*, at *any due time*, not letting or omitting thereby the service or any part thereof." It was enacted by Queen Elizabeth,* that the livings which had been appointed for the maintenance of men and children, to use singing in the church, should be continued, in order that "the laudable science of music" should be "held in estimation and preserved in knowledge;" and also that "in all parts of the common prayer" "a modest and distinct song," "so used" that the same "may be as plainly understood as if read without singing, and yet for the comforting of such as delight in musick:" in the beginning or in the end of common prayer there may be sung an hymn or song to the praise of

* 49th Injunction given to the clergy and laity.

Almighty God, in the best sort of melody and music, but “having respect that the sentence of the hymn may be understood and perceived.” Strype confirms the statement that congregational singing was introduced into England by the exiles on their return from Geneva and other places on the Continent—“As soon as they commenced singing in public in one little church in London, immediately not only in the churches in the neighbourhood, but even the towns far distant, began to vie with each other in the practice. You may now sometimes see at Paul’s cross after the service, six thousand persons, young and old, of all sexes, singing together; this sadly annoys the mass priests, for they perceive that by this means the sacred discourse sinks more deeply into the minds of men.” It is thought that the Genevan psalms of 1556 were used.

Thomas Sternhold published nineteen psalms in rhyme or meter, probably in 1547; then followed 44 psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins in 1549-53. The first complete edition of Sternhold and Hopkins’ psalms was published in 1562, “with assistant notes to synge them withall.” The preface states that they are designed for public as well as private worship.* The Brownists objected strongly to this version. The question whether it was a proper and scriptural method to sing in public worship with conjoined voices, or a single person at a time, being moved by the Holy Spirit so to do, was debated, and also whether it was proper to sing David’s psalms in verse or metre. As early as the year 1636, congregational singing was introduced in New England, and in 1640 Mr. Richard Mather, of Dorchester, Thomas Weld and John Eliot, of Roxbury, versified the psalms.

* The only known copy of this work is in the possession of the Author’s father-in-law, Francis Fry, of Bristol. It has the autograph of Lord Burleigh, and was presented by him to his daughter, Ann Cecil.

This was the first book printed in America.* From the Presbyterio-Independent Churches in America, the practice was gradually adopted by the Independents in England. We annex in the note, an account of the rise of congregational singing among the Independents and Baptists.† It was not until about the year 1690 that “conjoint singing,” or what we now call congregational singing, was commenced in the Baptist churches, and a very severe controversy ensued, and it was only very gradually adopted. Concessions were made by the older members, and it was arranged

* See a literal reprint of the Bay Psalm Book, New York, 1862. Also, for a very valuable history of the subject, Neil Levingstone's reprint of the Scottish Metrical Psalter, 1635.

† **SHORT HISTORY OF THE RISE OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING AMONG THE INDEPENDENTS AND BAPTISTS.**

In 1523, Barrow, in his reply to Gifford, to the charge of “speaking profanely of singing psalms,” says that he is not against “that comfortable and heavenly harmony of singing psalms,” but against “the rhyming and paraphrasing the psalms as in your church,” and “the apocryphal, erroneous ballads in rhyme, sung commonly in your church, instead of the psalms and songs of the canonical Scriptures.” In 1644, “The Booke of Psalms Englished, both in prose and metre,” by Henry Ainsworth, was published at Amsterdam, with musical notes. Singing was at first neglected by Johnson's and Ainsworth's church in Amsterdam, but afterwards “by some of them was attempted, but “with barbarous success.” In the Independent church at Arnheim, in Holland, founded by T. Goodwin and Philip Nye, a controversy arose whether singing in the church of Christ was to be that of *one person singly*, or “conjoined singing.”* It may be questioned whether the Independents did not originate the practice of congregational singing in some church in London, for the indefatigable Edwards, in the third part of his *Gangroena*, page 13, in his supplementary list of the grievous errors and heretical practices of the sectaries, mentions that an Independent minister had maintained in the hearing of a “godly minister,” that *organs* are a sanctified adjunct in the service of God now under the gospel, and that if any man in the church had a gift of making hymns, he might bring them in to be sung with organs or other instruments of music. This must have been in 1645 or 1646, but the writer has not met with evidence of singing in public worship being adopted by the Independents or Brownists, earlier than 1648.† In 1647, John Cotton, of Boston, in New England, published in London,

* I. Lydius Historie der beroeten van England, 1649. Pages 83 and 84.

† The lay Divine, or the Simple House-preaching Taylor, 1646—“Hereupon he giveth a psalm, which his congregation chant with harsh voices”—“so that should their rude tones approach your eare, you could not but feare you were in the suburbs of Pluto's mansion!”

to take place only at the commencement or end of the worship, so that the objecting members might not be present if they scrupled at the practice. The objections of the Independents and Baptists were originally very similar to those of the Friends. One great objection was to Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical version of the psalms, and a doubt was expressed as to whether a versification of the psalms was lawful. Another was, that as it was illegal to stay away from church, persons of wicked lives were forced to take the words of David, describing his holy feelings, into their mouths. The saints alone might sing, the wicked would more properly "howl," for sorrow of heart. Another was, that singing,

"Singing of Psalms a Gospel Ordinance." He maintained that unbelievers, as well as believers, might sing psalms, and *in tunes*; and he speaks as if singing had been abandoned by many Independent Churches. In 1653, Cuthbert Sydenham, an Independent, "joynt overseer with William Durant," hopes that when "men's hearts come in tune, their voices will likewise." Organs and harps he objects to, but considers that where "the Church and saints of God are gathered together, it is no more unlawful to sing with others that stand by and joyn their voices, than *when in prayer they stand and give their consent.*" He observes, that it is to be desired that more care in the choice of psalms were taken, to fit them for the use of a mixed congregation.* The practice of conjunct or congregational singing in public worship, was considered by the General Baptist Association of Churches in London, in 1689, and "it was not deemed any way safe for the churches to admit such carnal formalities," and they gave their judgment "that the singing of *one* was the same as the singing of the whole," precisely as the prayer of one is the prayer of the whole congregation. A controversy in the Baptist churches was commenced in print, by a work called "The Breach repaired in God's Worship," by Benjn. Keach, in 1691, pastor of the Baptist church at Horsleydown. Keach says that the rule of the Baptist church was not general councils or synods, but God's Holy Word. That the said ordinance is a scriptural ordinance under the new covenant. He was replied to by Isaac Marlow, in "Truth soberly defended, &c." A work was then published by Richard Allen, which was replied to by Richard Claridge, while yet a Baptist minister, in "An answer to Richard Allen's essay," in which Allen endeavours to prove that singing of psalms with conjoined voices is a Christian duty; London, 1697, with an introduction by William Russell, P. D., Cambridge. This is an elaborate and learned treatise. He gives it as his opinion, that "the vocal singing of one person at a time as is a special gift of the Holy Spirit, that is, when a person sings by the inspiration of God *without all help of human art and skill,*" and the rest of the

* "A Christian and Sober Exercitation," &c. London, 1653.

like prayer, should only be performed when a distinct motion of the Spirit was felt.

It may be generally stated, that congregational singing was not common in England among the Free Churches till the year 1700, and that the objections of Fox and others to singing in the churches, were those common to all the Separatist churches of his time. These objections were probably intensified by their opposition to the stringent action of Archbishop Laud, in enforcing attendance at church, and to the action of the Assembly of Divines,

congregation “making melody with their hearts,” is “an eminent part of God’s worship.”

In 1696 a pamphlet, entitled “Scripture Proof for Singing of Scriptural Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs,” by E. H., London, 1696, with preface by Nathaniel Mather and Isaac Chauncey, sums up the argument in favour of congregational singing: “In the New Testament,” it is said “we have several directions about singing.—1st. *What* we should sing.—The Word of God: Col. ii. 16; James v. 13; Psalms. 2nd. *How* to sing.—Sing with grace: Col. iii. 16. Sing with the voice: Luke xix. 37; Acts xvi. 25. Paul and Silas sang with the *voice* that others might understand with the spirit: 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 16. Then as to music or melody, we are told to have it in our *hearts*: Eph. v. 19.” And to what purpose, it is asked, are all these directions in the New Testament scriptures about singing, if it is not to be practised? And, lastly, there is no authority from Christ to the church, to prevent unbelievers singing in the assemblies of the church; indeed, it seems to have been prophesied, “all the earth shall worship thee and shall sing unto thee, they shall sing unto thy Name,” &c. The fact that our Saviour and his disciples had sung a psalm before our Lord’s betrayal, was represented, by the party who opposed congregational singing, to be a part of the Old Covenant, and further, the word *τύποντες* might “imply that they lamented because their Master was betrayed.” (W. Russell’s Brief Animadversion, p. 63. London, 1696.) Nearly a century elapsed before the practice of congregational singing was adopted in the last Baptist church. The attention which the Wesleys gave to Congregational singing is well known, both as to the matter and character of the hymns, and to the simple, chaste, and classical music to which they were originally set. That these hymns so sung, were blessed by God to arrest the attention, and to serve as a means of the conversion of many persons, is a matter of history. It must be fully admitted, that whatever may be the abuses of paid and surpliced choirs, and the introduction of *mere musical entertainment* into the worship of God, the judgment of the various churches in times of the greatest earnestness and piety, appears, to have been, since that time, to approve the use of simple congregational singing as a means by which the humblest members of the church may give vocal expression to their religious feelings, without difficulty, or the interruption of the public worship of others.

who were known to be preparing a metrical psalter for general use. This, however, was never agreed upon.

A single specimen of a hymn set to musical notes is found in the first edition in Dutch of William Sewel's well-known history of the Society of Friends, published in 1717, while in the English translation it is omitted. We insert it in fac-simile, and also translated into modern musical notes:—

“Dewyl de Lófzang van Katharyne Evans, op de 369^{ste} bladzyee deezer Historie slechts in onrym vertuald staat, heb ik goedgevonden dezelve aldus in rym over te brengen, om zo wel in't Nederduytsch als in't Engelsch te kunnen gezongen worden.”



Lóf zy den Schep-per die my niet,



Uyt zyn' ged-ach-ten heeft vers-too-ten,



Nóch voor-zo-veel't myn oog aan-ziet



Me uyt zyn gen-ade heeft ges-loo-ten.



Eynd-lo-oze gloo-ri, lóf en prys zy zy-nen naam:



Ik galm zyne ee-dle faam.

The words attached to the ancient tune above are a Dutch translation of the following hymn of Catherine

Evans, "in order," as Sewel says, "that it can be sung in Low German as well as in English:—"

"All praise to him that hath not put
 Nor cast me out of mind,
 Nor yet his mercy from me shut,
 As I should ever find.
 Infinite glory, laud, and praise
 Be given to his Name
 Who hath made known in these our days
 His strength and noble fame.
 Oh, none is like unto the Lamb,
 Whose beauty shineth bright;
 Oh, glorify his Holy Name,
 His Majesty and Might."

This ancient tune is thus rendered into modern music:—

Larghetto.

Sewel was a member of the Society of Friends, and the only explanation of this insertion in the Dutch edition, and not in the English, which the author can suggest is, that the practice of singing hymns lingered in Holland longer than in England. The early Friends had no objection to hymns in rhyme or "metre" being sung, but this must not be done by "the world," but by those who "live and dwell in the grace of God, and sing with grace in the heart."* Margaret Fox (formerly Margaret Fell) appears to have approved and encouraged the practice, and it was opposed in the north by Story and Wilkinson,† although it appears there were differences of opinion, "long" previously, among Friends on the subject.‡

In consequence of this, an epistle was issued from the newly constituted Yearly Meeting, in 1675, "concerning sighing, groaning, and singing in the church." "It hath been, and is, our living sense and constant testimony, according to our experience, of the divers operations of the Spirit and power of God in His church, that there has been, and is, serious sighing, sensible groaning, and reverent *singing*, breathing forth an heavenly sound of joy with grace, with the Spirit and with the understanding," &c., "which is not to be quenched or discouraged in any," unless "immoderate." It must be obvious, that the *practical difficulty* of carrying out the singing of a single person, as he or she was moved to sing, in precisely the same manner as free vocal

* See "Truth's Defence against the Refined Subtilty of the Serpent," by G. Fox and R. Hubberthorne, 1658, page 21:—"Those who are moved to sing with understanding, making melody to the Lord in their hearts we own; if it be in meeter, we own it."

† Margaret Fox gave out a paper against John Story, "signifying that he judged the power of God as it broke forth in hymns and spiritual songs."—"Christian Quaker," 4th part, page 14. See also Blaykling MS.

‡ Letter of Ministers' Meeting in London, to Bristol Meeting—in archives of Bristol Meeting.—20/8/1679.

prayer, was very great; although a similar practice has been revived, it has been considered by some with beneficial results, by D. Moody and I. Sankey, the American revivalists. In this instance, however, the difficulty has been removed by the full admission of a *general* motion of the Holy Spirit, in addition to a particular motion to sing.

In consequence of considerable opposition being raised to the practice, George Fox writes thus in 1653 to Robert Ariss:—"Why should not *them that sings* have liberty of conscience to sing in your meetings? I do look upon thee as a competent judge whether they sing in grace or no." At Reading, in 1662, the trustee of the meeting-house (who was one of the Story and Wilkinson party) threatened to shut the congregation out of their meeting-house; "if any should go about to bring in *novelties* and *innovations* and set up *idolatry* in our house," *i.e.*, meeting-house, "he should not give his consent;" and in the following year we find that he said that "singing" or speaking singly in prayer, preaching, or *with a vocal voice (sic.)*, was an abomination.* Crœse says in his History (page 55, edition 1696), that occasionally "not only one or two, but all that are present, do sing with a sweet and pleasant voice, and that in such exercises the ministers are the most frequent, although none of the rest are excluded."†

The first actual separation of the Story and Wilkinson party, commenced about 1675, in the meeting of Preston. Thirty-four members joined with Story, and formed a distinct congregation, while twenty-nine protested against the proceeding.‡ Other meetings were formed in the same

* Minutes of Reading Meeting.

† In Ireland Fox mentions that the whole congregation sang.—MSS. in Devonshire House Library, concerning Fox's journey in Ireland.

‡ "Kendal Quarterly Meeting book."

neighbourhood, in London, in Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, Bristol, Westmoreland* (1682); a paper was issued and signed by eighty-seven members of Kendal meeting, and one in Wiltshire signed by 126 members. These figures in no way represent the extensive character of the agitation, with which large numbers secretly sympathised.† Unwearied efforts were made, by private conversation, by public preaching, by the press, and in extreme cases, by the use of church discipline, to remove the unsettled state of feeling in the newly-formed Society. A meeting was arranged between Story, Wilkinson and Rodgers, on the side of the Separatists, and Fox and others, at John Blayking's house, at Drawell, near Sedburg. It commenced on the 3rd of Second Month, 1676, and continued its sittings four days. Story and Wilkinson appeared to have been half-persuaded to relinquish their opposition, and the meeting ended by "a paper of condemnation" of their conduct, in very general terms, being signed by Story and Wilkinson, to the effect that they had no wish to give offence to the church of God, or to oppose any faithful brethren in "the practice of those things they believe are their duty." Questions appear to have been propounded to the meeting by Story and Wilkinson, relating to the points—1st. As to the extent to which the individual member of a church was to act "in matters of faith and discipline" according as he "was persuaded and instructed by the manifestation of God's Spirit and truth in his own heart." They contended that these matters of outward arrangement and form "were

* "Yearly Meeting Records."

† The "Morning Meeting" in London, shortly after the meeting at Drawell, made an order that a paper of G. Fox's, which was addressed to "all the meetings in the nation," should *not* be read. G. F. writes, that he did not "set up that meeting to make orders against the reading of my papers!" Fox regards this as a movement of sympathy with Story and Wilkinson.—G. F. to Women's Meeting.—"Swarthmore MSS.," vol. v.

not essential to salvation, because we had salvation before we had them ; " that some things were better left to " the wisdom of God and as occasion should direct," than to be made church regulations : as for example, if a man were " really charitable," did it matter " whether he dispose of his gifts by his own hands or those of his wife," &c., or " by the members of the church," or whether they " choose deacons" to dispense the charity.* 2ndly. On the question of the independency of churches, viz., whether the judgment given forth by " *one part* of the members of Christ's body can become a bond upon any *other part* of the said body *farther than their understandings are illuminated?*" This involves the whole question of the absolute, or the limited independency of churches. They did not forget to remind Fox, that the independency of the churches had been practically acknowledged by an ancient paper, circulated among them from " the Elders and Brethren in the North."† This was doubtless settled, by Fox stating his intention that the action of the " synods" complained of was not intended to override the independency of the churches, but was to be strictly representative, and thus their action would be only so far as " the understandings" of the individual churches should be " illuminated." They regarded, with great jealousy, the Central Yearly Meeting of London, which they compared to a " High Court of Judicature," and declared it would become " a

* See MS. by J. Blaykling and others.

† See pp. 390 and 391. " From the Spirit of Truth to all the Children of Light, in the Light who walk, that order may be kept in obedience to God," &c.

Note annexed :—" Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all with the measure of the Light, which is pure and holy, may be guided : who in the Light walking and abiding, these things must be fulfilled in the Spirit and not from the letter—for the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive."—Bristol MSS.

new Rome in time." They made use of the principle which Perrott had enunciated, that "the fellowship of the Spirit did not stand in outward forms," against the form of Church government, &c., established by Fox, forgetting that united action could not be obtained when all were "left to the inward persuasion of the spirit in their minds" in these matters; and it was asked, "what will become of the comely order of the Gospel, and true form therein, and what will become of the form of sound words which the apostle exhorted the early Christians to hold fast." They were asked, ought not "Christian Churches to deny" (*i.e.*, excommunicate) "for breach of fundamental articles?" And they answered, that if such articles were against the Light of Christ in individual consciences, was not the requiring of submission an infringement of "Christian Liberty?" If these outward forms were to be obeyed at a moment when the Spirit of God did not move the individual to obey, how was "New Light" again to break forth to God's glory? *

Much was said in condemnation of Story and Wilkinson, in the heat of controversy, which the calm judgment of Christian men, with the history of the Society before them, will not endorse. They declared that they were misrepresented, when it was said that they were opposed to the Church meetings as established by Fox, in their general objects. They appear to have objected to their being held regularly, whether there was business to transact or not which fell properly within their province.† They objected to papers of "condemnation" "standing on our deacons' books to posterity."‡ Fox replied, it appears, that

* See p. 13, *et seq.*, of R. Gordon's "Spiritual Order and Christian Liberty."

† See page 395 for explanation of what these were.

‡ Pages 7 and 52 of "Christian Quaker," 4th part.

"recording condemnation" was no new thing now imposed by him for the first time, but that "some were on record since 1652." It appears that their view on this point was practically approved by the majority of the churches. Story considered, that although "Christianity required Christians to be charitable to the poor," yet "the manner of doing it was indifferent," and that it was inexpedient that it should be introduced into the strict province of any church assembly.* They did not consider that the refusal to pay tythes should be required of all the members of the Society on pain of disownment, but that all the members should be left to their own conscience's freedom. They considered that there was no occasion for "women's meetings" "as distinct from the men." If there was a necessity in the subject matter coming before a church, that women alone should have the management of, it was desirable that it should be dealt with by them alone, but except in large towns they did not see the desirability of their general establishment.† Particularly, they greatly objected to the intentions of marriage being laid before these newly established women's meetings for their consent. They thought that any groanings, sighings, soundings, and singings, which were the result of the operation of God's Spirit, could not be objected to, but that often these "outward exclamations" "were deceit," and they believed they had acted in "sound judgment" in using their influence to repress them."‡ Objections were also made, as we have

* Page 20, "R. Gordon on Spiritual Order and Liberty."

† "They were now high enough already, they needed not to be put higher."—Blayking and others' MSS.

‡ "Questions proposed by J. W. and J. S. to Friends of the meeting at Drawell, and their answer." They especially objected to "unintelligible and disorderly singing," and Story publicly reproved a minister for it, saying that "he would either bring it

already shown, to the bringing under cognizance of the newly-established church meetings, the outward affairs, the dress, &c., of members of the church, which at a later period, as we shall show, was carried to an extent wholly unwarranted by scriptural precedent or sound sense. They also objected to the censorship of the press by the meeting of ministers. A curious instance of their strong tinge of Independency, may be found in the Separatists' defence of the expediency of "flying in time of persecution," and the controversy which ensued merely repeats the old arguments of John Robinson and Thomas Helwys*—Story and Wilkinson taking the grounds taken by Robinson, and the Friends that of Helwys, denouncing them, and asking "what would become of fellowship of the saints in light, if Friends should be of such a cowardly spirit" as to forsake their "general assembly," and run away like offenders, into "gills, holes, and corners," to escape a prison !†

Three meetings were again held at Bristol, the 4th of Twelfth Month, 1677, at which William Penn and others were present, to settle matters with W. Rodgers, but these also were practically abortive. In 1681,‡ Rodgers, who was one of the trustees of the large meeting-house at Bristol, took possession of it, and the "writings" in the hands of the meeting, and it was not till the 19th of Fifth Month, 1686, that the "keys of the great meeting-house" were again obtained. He did the same at Olveston meeting. In 1685, the Separatists of Reading, in a similar manner,

down or leave preaching." "The people of the world," too, appear to have thought some of the singing deficient in harmony; while the faithful considered it "a heavenly noise."—Blaykling and others' MSS.

* Pages 93 and 94. † Blaykling and others' MSS.

‡ Bristol Records, 6th First Month, 1681.]

turned Friends out of their meeting-house, and the Reading Friends met in the street, "being kept even in their spirit," "and in the lamb-like nature." The Separatists' meeting was held on the same side of the street, and they informed "the people" that the "old meeting-house" was closed, and sent the public into their meeting.* At Chippenham and Calne the meeting-houses were also seized.† These and some other proceedings of the Separatists tended to alienate from them a large body of sympathizers, and the more eminent men who had leaned to their side (such as Justice Gervase Benson and others‡), and the weight of both talent and ability, as well as personal character, being against them, they fell off one by one from the Separation, and were again received with too great readiness into communion. Had the separation been decisive and complete, the views of the founders of the Society would have been more fully carried out.

Wearied with a controversy which had lasted for twenty years,§ which they had to cope with in their old age, and amid imprisonments and persecutions, they were doubtless induced to leave some most important questions in the constitution of the new society unsettled. Large bodies of persons holding some of the pernicious principles of the Ranters and Seekers, and the more moderate views of the Story and Wilkinson Separatists, remained in connection with the Society, and the more enlightened and advancing views of its founders respecting the position of the Christian

* Records of Reading Meeting.

† "Rogero Mastix," p. 28.

‡ "Account of the Publishing of Truth in Westmoreland," Devonshire House Library. Gervase Benson had been "a Colonel Justice of Peace, Mayor of Kendal, Commissary in the Deaconry of Richmond before the late domestic wars." He obtained for "Friends the power of proving wills and taking letters of administration, which hath been continued to this day."

§ "Rogero Mastix," p. 7, published 1685.

ministry in the church of Christ as developed in the New Testament, were gradually exchanged for the quietism of the Seekers, who denied the authority for the existence of any system of officers in the Church, and the ultra-democratic views of the pantheistic Ranters, which placed all the members of the church on a level of an equality so complete, as to level all distinctions of office, and to make the supposition of the Apostle Paul in the twelfth chapter of the First of Corinthians, of "the eye" saying to "the hand," or "the head" to "the foot," "I have no need of thee"—an historical reality. These things eventually struck at the root of all healthy growth and progress, in the new church founded by Fox and his coadjutors the travelling Ministers. The men had joined with him in the enterprise from motives, whose purity was perhaps as fully tested by persecution as those of the early preachers of the Primitive Church, but this did not secure them from the misrepresentations of the school of opinion in the Society whose object was to abolish *the very idea* of the Christian Ministry as the executive of the church, and to cherish the idea that there was some analogy between a purely lay ministry, and a state-supported hierarchy. Too much was conceded to these people, and we shall see that this paved the way for the gradual progress of their views. The controversy was at last pretty much handed over to Ellwood, and not the least instructive and amusing portion of it is to be found in a passage of arms *in rhyme*, between Rodgers and Ellwood. In 1685, Rodgers published his "Second Scourge for George Whitehead":—

"So flat, so dull, so rough, so void of grace,
Where symphony and cadence have no place,
So full of chasms stuck with prosy pegs,
Whereon his tired Muse might rest her legs."

as Ellwood describes it in his "Rogero Mastix," or "A Rod for William Rodgers," published in the same year. Amusing as this pamphlet is, it proves beyond a question the existence of some most important points in the religious history of Fox and his coadjutors, which have been hitherto overlooked, but which are not the less instructive.

"Fox and his preachers" have departed, Rodgers says, from "the ancient path." They are submitting the "motion of the Spirit" to man's guidance. "The Church dared not show her discontent,"

"Tho' she hath cried aloud once and again,
'Gainst Black Coats for their being sent of men.'

They (the preachers) "laboured hard to gain more proselytes," and actually now had started a kind of Foreign Missionary Society !

"Preachers approved by man beyond the seas went,
Who, when they wanted moneys to proceed,
The Church her cash did then supply their need!"

At length the cry was "money, money, for the ministry!" At last these preachers must be *entirely supported*. Some had lost their trades, and preaching was easier than labour.

"For who again with pleasure turns to labour,
That had so easy trades through Fox's favour,
As preaching but a few hours in a week,
To wound the just, and self thereby to seek?"

And some with "thundering lungs" proclaimed

"That leaving trades was most useful to men,
When they of preaching made a trade again."

Some had

". . . lately taught the thriving sheep—
You are the vineyards that we are to keep!
Oh shame on such as for *it the clergy blame*,
And yet in the name of 'Church' do act the same."

Ellwood replies in better rhyme, and not without wit,

although his verse is hardly what we should expect from a disciple of Milton :—

“The blest Apostles sometimes others *sent*,
And sometimes, also sent by others, went.
How oft did Paul send Timothy and Titus,
Belovéd Tychicus, Epaphroditus,
Onesimus, Erastus, and some others,
True Gospel preachers and beloved brothers ?

* * * * *

“Can’st thou imagine they who thus were sent,
On the *mere motion* of the *Apostle* went?
No. They no question in *themselves* did find
The *same good motion* stirring up their mind;
With what the good Apostle did advise
The Holy Ghost in them did harmonize.”

“Outward teachers” were needed in the Church. The case of the parish preachers was quite beside the mark, and the objections of the Society of Friends to them, depended on grounds entirely distinct. Ellwood contended, that while the Holy Spirit was the “inward teacher” of every Christian man,

“Yet do the Scriptures plainly too declare,
And Paul himself doth testimony bear,
That Christ, when he ascended up on high,
Gave *teachers* for the work o’ th’ ministry;
And gave those teachers gifts to fit them to
Th’ work he had appointed them to do.
One of those teachers, too, in downright terms,
Th’ Apostle Paul himself to be affirms,
By which we plainly see our gracious Lord
Did *outward teachers* to His Church afford.”

Ellwood asserts :—

“That ‘tis the Church’s duty to supply
The needful wants of all her ministry.”

The Apostle Paul asserted his right to a maintenance, and although he did not take it of the Corinthians,

“That what was lacking to him privately,
The Macedonian brethren did supply.”

In reply to the cavil of Rodgers, respecting the supply of

the needs of such preachers as were approved by the Church, and who had a motion of God's Spirit to go on this mission service beyond the seas, Ellwood replies :—

“Truth must not be refused
Because it is by evil men abused,
And truth it is, too plain to be denied,
Christ's Church should for Christ's Ministers provide.”

Ellwood ends his argument with Rodgers, by lines which have proved prophetic :—

“Must Christ be so confined he may not send
Any but such as have estates to spend?
God bless us from such doctrine and such teachers,
As will admit of none but wealthy teachers!”

For the last one hundred years of the history of the Society of Friends, and particularly of later years, their preachers may with small exception be called “wealthy preachers. We shall shortly see that the important element of religious knowledge did not increase and spread. The Society of Friends ultimately followed the advice of Rodgers, instead of that of Ellwood and Fox. Fox's view is fully justified, that the Separatists and their sympathizers, who, he says, were “many,” “had taken more pains to unsettle and disquiet “the Church, than they ever had taken for the cause of Christian truth. “Few,” he says, know the “labour and travel” he has had for the establishing of the Church organization of the Society.* The principles of the Ranters and Seekers destroyed their congregations within thirty or forty years, and by the year 1709 these Separatists from the Friends, who had much in common with them, are reported to have grown very few in number.”† We shall show in a future chapter the prejudicial effect of these principles, which, like an evil leaven, still

* MSS. Devonshire House. Swarthmore MSS. Vol. 5.

† Yearly Meeting Records, Devonshire House.

influenced the actions of the Society of Friends,* and, unsuspected, worked out their legitimate results.

* In 1681, Stephen Crisp addressed "A Faithful Warning and Exhortation to Friends, to beware of Seducing Spirits." In this he states that the following questions were then endeavoured to be disseminated among the Friends, which he terms "sowing these cursed seeds of fleshly liberty and Ranterism :—‘What the forbidden fruit was. That the soul was mortal. The state of the soul after death, whether it abides ‘a singular essence,’ or ceaseth to have any singular essence or being? The future punishment of wicked men and devils, in the world to come.’" What was it? The plain declarations "of Christ and his holy Apostles respecting the eternal punishment of the wicked,—these they limit to ages." Some hold that if they do evil, their "hell is only here in his own conscience; that when he leaves the world all things will be as if they had not been, and the soul die with the body, or shall be *swallowed up particularly, as a drop of water in the sea.*"

CHAPTER XX.

THE PERSECUTIONS OF THE RESTORATION. DISORGANIZATION OF THE MACHINERY OF THE FREE CHURCHES FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR TEACHING. INTERNAL HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS RESUMED. THEIR SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY AND INCREASE IN NUMBERS. DIFFICULTIES AS TO RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND THE MEMBERSHIP OF CHILDREN. THE THEOCRATIC CHURCH GOVERNMENT CARRIED OUT BY THE FRIENDS, THE BAPTISTS, AND TO SOME EXTENT BY THE INDEPENDENTS. VANITY IN DRESS REPRESSED. THE THEOCRACY EMBRACES THE WHOLE OUTWARD LIFE OF MAN.

THE Church established by George Fox, seems to have worked well during the period between 1668, the period when their church organization was completed, and the year 1712 or 1720. It does not fall within the province of this work, to describe the fearful persecutions which took place between the accession of Charles II., and that of William and Mary. During some portions of this period, the Independent and Baptist assemblies were completely broken up. Many of their most eminent ministers were in prison. The Society of Friends kept their regular meetings during the whole of this period, and received a very considerable accession of numbers.* Fox saw that the crisis was come, and like an old commander-in-chief in the cause of liberty of conscience, gave the word: "Now is the time

* See Baxter's "Autobiography," L. 1, part 2, p. 437.

for *you* to stand, you that have been public men (*i.e.*, ministers), and formerly did travel abroad; mind and keep up your testimony, *go into your meeting-houses as at other times.*" When their meeting-houses were pulled down, they met again upon the ruins. When their ministers were all in prison,* they met in entire silence, and it became a legal question whether "this silence was a religious exercise not allowed by the Liturgy,"† &c. They were dragged from their meetings to prison by the brutal soldiery, their women were insulted, their houses were broken up. In some places nearly the whole of the male attenders of their meetings were at times in prison. On the 18th April, 1682, in Bristol, nearly all the attenders, male and female, were in prison, but the meetings were continued by *the children*. Their age exempted them from imprisonment, but they were confined in the stocks, and beaten unmercifully with twisted whalebone sticks.‡ It was so also at Reading. "Our little children," writes T. Curtis to George Fox, from Reading, 15th of Eleventh Month, 1664, "kept the meeting up when we were all in prison, notwithstanding their wicked justice, when he found them, beat them with a staff that he had, with a spear in it, would pull them out of the meeting, and punch them in the back till some of them have been black in the face."§ Thirteen thousand five hundred and sixty-two persons of the Society of Friends suffered imprisonment between 1661 and 1697. One hundred and ninety-eight

* G. Whitehead mentions, that it was his usual practice on going to meeting, to put his nightcap in his pocket, the probability being that he would spend the night in a prison.

† "Baxter's Life," L. 1, part 2, p. 436.

‡ Fuller's "Rise of Dissent in Bristol," 1840, pp. 271, 272.

§ Swarthmore MSS., Devonshire House.

were transported beyond the seas, and three hundred and thirty-eight died in prison or of their wounds.* This amount of suffering was aggravated by the confiscation of property, and spoiling of their goods to an enormous amount, and *to an extent which disorganized the trade of the kingdom.*

It is admitted on all hands, that the Christian non-resistance and patient suffering of the Society which was in the providence of God, moulded by George Fox to some extent from the Puritan gentry, as well as the yeomen, artizans, and the Independent and Baptist soldiery, formed a spiritual army which had no small share in winning for England the religious liberty which she now enjoys. It had been fought for with carnal weapons by religious men, and their religion had suffered in the conflict.

Many of the Baptists had laid aside their original scruples, and had taken up the sword.† In spite of the fearful struggles of the civil wars, Episcopacy was re-established. The sense of weariness and despair which was experienced by the Independents‡ and Baptists, some of whom, like the Society of Friends, had simply desired the separation of the Church from the State, can not only be imagined, but readily traced in the records of these

* Neal states—p. 271, vol. 3, Toulmin's edition—that it was computed 8,000 Dissenters died in prison during Charles the Second's reign.

† “I wonder how these have fallen out of late to be men of war, whereas in former years Anabaptists would wear no weapon, yea not carry arms in their shipes to defend themselves withal.”—See “A Monstrous Dispute,” by William Erbury, Pastor of the Church at Lanrages. *See Appendix to this Chapter*—“Declaration of certain people called Anabaptists.”

‡ The Humble Petition of the Brownists to the House of Commons, 1641. British Museum, E-34-178, 10th pamphlet, page 2.—“Whether it were not more convenient for the State, and more grateful to the subjects, to tolerate *all* professions *whatsoever*, *every one* being *left to use his own conscience*” (!) “none to be punished or persecuted for it.” It will thus be seen, that as early as 1641, the section of the Independents called Brownists, petitioned for *complete* liberty of conscience. See p. 141.

times. They needed the lesson, which amidst the excitement of the struggle they had well nigh forgotten, that Christ's kingdom is "not of this world," and that therefore his "servants" must not "fight." What they had failed to obtain by the sword of the flesh, was obtained for them by the sword of the Spirit. The battle was won, but it has been too generally forgotten that it was purchased at a fearful cost.*

The spirit with which the contest was entered into on both sides, may be judged of from the two following quotations† from an address, "To both Houses of Parliament," by Martin Mason, 2nd of Ninth Month, 1660, where the author advises the parliament not to consent to establish any outward form of religion by force, but to let their "laws be a terror to evil doers," and to "give free toleration in the exercise of a tender conscience;" and proceeds: "You may take notice of the preceding powers that have split on this rock; and do you think to make war with the Lamb, and meet with victory?" "You resolve to suppress the righteous Seed in the people called Quakers;" and he then breaks out into the following eloquent passage, "Alas, poor mortals! think you to limit that which is eternal? You may as well command the fire from burning, the wind from blowing, the sun from shining, the rain from showering, the grass from springing up or growing, as offer to attempt it. If you can span the circumference of the earth, or dry up the ocean with your breath; if you can turn autumn into spring,

* Within three years Dissenters suffered in penalties for worshipping God to the amount of two millions sterling. Page 383, Neale's History, Toulmin's edition, vol. 3. (Defoe's preface to Delaune's Plea) Neale states that from the Restoration to the Revolution their losses amounted to twelve or fourteen millions.—Neale's History, vol. 3, p. 272.

† Fly Sheet.—York Friends' Library.

or count the number of the stars, and reckon the very sand on the sea shore ; then may you limit the Holy One, and drown his Israel in the sea ! And as for us, our hope and help is in Israel's God, and we fear not what man can do unto us."

It may be generally stated, that the whole machinery for religious teaching, of the Independents and Presbyterians, the Baptists and the Society of Friends, was thrown out of gear, and as far as possible destroyed, by the strong arm of the law ! Their chapels and meeting-houses were in many cases levelled with the ground and burnt.* Not only were their young people debarred from the blessings of religious teaching, but their very schools were broken up and destroyed, and the effects in a religious point of view on the rising generation, and on the country generally, were proportionately disastrous.† This is, we believe, one of the main causes of the deadness of religion prior to the preaching of the Wesleys and Whitfield, in 1738. The children of the Nonconformists had not only suffered in everything which was calculated to injure their religious and secular education, but the progress of church extension was checked.

The work of the free churches, in the evangelization of the country, was also to a great extent arrested. The depression and discouragement which prevailed led to the acceptance of principles adverse to the promulgation of Christianity. The works of Madame Guion, Fénélon,

* "We burnt *ten cart loads* of pulpit doors, gates and seats, in the market place (of Taunton), we staid till three in the morning before all were burnt. We were very merry. The bells rang all night. The church is now full, and thank God for it ! The fanatics dare not open their mouths." Life of Joseph Alleyne, by Charles Stanford, p. 381.—Quotation from State Paper Office, August 11, 1683. Sir W. Jenkins, XIII.

† In 1679, "the low and suffering condition of Friends" in many parts, from the effects of persecution, is mentioned.—Yearly Meeting Minutes, Devonshire House.

Antonia Bourignon, and other writers, were very popular. The opinion appears to have increasingly gained ground, that enough had been done and suffered in the propagation of Christianity, and that to cultivate the garden of their own soul was a more promising field of action for the Christian Church; forgetting that nothing tends so much to the increase of personal religion as the active effort to benefit others. This supplies a training for the heart, which silence and retirement from the world can never give. It was so with the Society of Friends. Not only was it obviously a congenial seed ground for this tendency of the times, but the absorption into the Society of Friends of the more mystical sects of the Commonwealth times, which has already been described, supplied the parent plants, which, fostered by the mystical writers produced a pernicious crop.* This disposition to withdraw from active gospel labour, was increased by certain defects in the church structure of the Society of Friends, of which the development will be traced.

Up to the period of about 1720, there was a good supply of preachers who were the immediate successors of the old stock.† The system of supplying meetings with ministers

* Jacob Boehmen's works were proscribed by Dublin Men's Meeting in 1681, and a minister silenced for lending them.—See minutes.

† MS. letter of John Banks to Friends, 29th of Third Month, 1699.—“The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has been, and is, powerfully and plentifully preached, and many have been, and yet are, the publishers and ministers thereof, though many of the ancient brethren whom the Lord first raised up have finished the work of their day, and are gathered to their everlasting rest in the fullness of glory, beyond the reach of all their enemies, adversaries, persecutors, and opposers. And, therefore, my heart is glad that the Lord has raised up so many younger brethren to preach the everlasting gospel.* But, dear friends, bear with me a little, for I must say unto

* Some curious evidence of the extensive character of the circulating ministry of the early Friends, has been found in the amount of food supplied for their horses.—See Beck and Ball's “London Meetings,” p. 127 and elsewhere.

was continued.* We may take the MS. Minutes of the Yearly Meeting of 1682, as the best possible proof of the religious condition of the Society of Friends towards the end of Charles the Second's reign, of which we place, in a foot note, a short summary.†

you, place not too much upon preaching only, yea, I must add, place not all upon preaching. For some are too ready to conclude, that if they have *many meetings, and hold out most of the time with preaching*, they have done all. And too many hearers, though professors of the truth, desire no more to be done. It is true, when we are concerned to preach the gospel to the people of the world, it is the greatest of our concern so to do, but when we come into the meetings of God's people already convinced, gathered and settled, and fully satisfied concerning the truth, it is far otherwise, for it need not now be said to many, 'Know the Lord.' . . . Friends in the ministry. . . . Speak not too many words in your *own meetings*, for some by so doing have lost their dominion and place in the hearts of sensible Friends. Wait for wisdom, &c., &c.'" He advises the young ministers to "make a good and right use" of what the early preachers "have left unto you," and not "find fault with what they have done, and think that you can mend it."

* "One new meeting-house, built at Manchester, and supplied on meeting days with public Friends."—MSS. Yearly Meeting minutes, Devonshire House, 1694.

† BEDFORD—No Friends have attended Yearly Meeting for several years.

BUCKS } "Meetings quiet."
BERKS }

CAMBRIDGE—"Growing better;" unity.

CHESTER,
CUMBERLAND } "Truth prospers."
CORNWALL

DERBY—No stir, little suffering.

DURHAM } "Truth prospers;" unity.
DEVON

DORSET—Very well; unity.

ESSEX AND COLCHESTER—"As well as our hearts could wish."

GLOUCESTER—Greater part in unity.

HAMPSHIRE—"Truth prospers; in many parts unity better than formerly, some that were distant."

HEREFORD—Very well; quiet; agree very well.

HERTFORD—"We hope there is a recovering, and truth is gaining ground."

HUNTS—"Well and quiet."

KENT—"A daily addition to truth;" general unity.

LANCASHIRE—"Several convinced;" never troubled with the spirit of division.

After the passing of the Toleration Act, we find that the establishment of schools occupied the immediate attention of the Society. In London, Bristol, and Dublin, we find that the meetings were much troubled by "rude boyes," and fifteen schools kept by members of the Society, are reported

LINCOLNSHIRE—"Truth grows;" peace and unity.

LEICESTERSHIRE—"We're always at unity; great sufferings."

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX—"Truth prospers; unity."

NOTTS—Some increase; Friends at unity, and tender of the truth."

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE—"No appearance of division."

OXFORD—"Truth prospers; for unity few counties are better."

SALOP—"Truth prospers."

SOMERSET—"Truth prospers well generally."

SUFFOLK—"Well, much love, in peace."

STAFFORD—"Truth prospers."

SURREY—"Nothing but very well."

SUSSEX—"Very well."

WARWICK—"No one present," William Gibson says; "a tender people there; much need of faithful labourers."

WORCESTER—No one present reported; generally well.

WESTMORELAND—Things are comfortable and well; love and concord is amongst us.

Some new meetings set up in those parts about Preston where the division was.

"More convinced than in twelve years before." And the next year, "Blessed be the name of the Lord, things are exceeding well."

WILTSHIRE—"Much tendered, several convinced."

YORKSHIRE—Love, peace and unity; a great coming in of people in the West Riding and other parts.

SOUTH WALES—Truth prospers; Friends' books to be translated into Welsh.

NORTH WALES—"Well; several convinced."

IRELAND—"Well; many coming in; no such thing as a spirit of division."

SCOTLAND—Truth prospers; love and unity.

AMERICA—"G. Fox says Friends there sent back William Rodgers' books."

HOLLAND—"A little handful of Friends in Amsterdam, make such a show as would not be thought!"

ALGIERS—A meeting kept up, some convinced.

From this period, to 1710 or 1712, the Society appears to have flourished in every sense, and large numbers of persons joined it. The contempt with which it was originally regarded was exchanged for general respect, insomuch that at Cambridge, where the scholars originally behaved so badly, it is reported to the Yearly Meeting that they came to Friends' meetings, "and behaved themselves soberly, and many of them will vindicate our principles."—Yearly Meeting minutes, 1710.

in 1691.* Their care was manifested much earlier, however, and it is obvious that as early as 1681 a religious education was sought to be given in their schools.†

In 1704, (just 30 years after the complete establishment of their Church system) the difficulty in which the Society was involved, by the admission of members to a close membership, which could not be *claimed* on broad and intelligible principles, appears to have commenced, and the Yearly Meeting advises that "care be taken to countenance and encourage young men and young women of sober conversation," to attend the meetings of the church, "to succeed them that are ancient."‡ Efforts were made specially to instruct the young, and meetings were appointed, advices were read, and occasionally papers were ordered to be prepared and read for the instruction of the children and servants of Friends.§ Religious meetings were held every

* In 1701, the Quarterly Meeting of Cornwall was told of some of the children of Friends who had grown up in gross ignorance, and orders its Monthly Meetings "not only to admonish parents, but that times and seasons may be set apart to enquire what proficiency children make in such (religious) knowledge, of which 'the work of redemption and sanctification' is indispensable."

† In 1681, in Aberdeen Monthly Meeting, two schools were established, one for boys and one for girls. The latter was held in the meeting-house. The school-mistress was besought by the church "to seek to accomplish herself in reading, writing and arithmetic," and also to get "a good stocking-weaver." The church also "had a true sense that there is cause for encouraging her." Some of the parents thought otherwise and withdrew their children, and it was directed "that they be weightily dealt with to return them again." The boys' school had a schoolmaster, who was allowed "100 pound rent." It was to impart "the Latin tongue and other commendable learning." The "priests" manifested "great trouble" at the setting up of this school, because "several considerable people of the world have sent their children thereto, highly commanding their profiting therein beyond their own schools. And some fruits also as to *conviction* and *conversion* among the young ones hath been of great encouragement to us."

‡ In 1704, young people, "sensible, qualified and made capable by waiting upon God," are "worthy to be esteemed members" of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings.—Yearly Meeting Minutes.

§ In 1703, Richard Claridge was appointed with another at Barking, "to prepare papers of advice suitable for the occasion," at Barking.—Beck and Ball's London Meetings, p. 280.

quarter in some of the London meetings, specially for young people.* In 1712, in Longford, a supply of "Barclay's Catechism," "Crisp's and Fox's Primer," was purchased by the church, who determined vigorously to instruct the young people. "Young, convinced, and well-inclined Friends" were to be "early visited by faithful Friends." The pastoral visitation of families was kept up. Probably the various catechisms which were printed, were used by the Ministers publishing them, and their brethren, in catechising the children in the families they visited in their pastoral or "family visits" during their travels, and Fox reminded his friends on one occasion, of the care they took in the early Puritan times in catechising their children and families. But these efforts do not appear to have been fully successful. The theory of membership in the early Society was, as we have shown, almost identical with that of the Baptists, only that in their efforts to assure themselves that the person was not merely a professor—to use the words of Fox—"a talker, not walker; a sayer, not doer,"† and in their desire to avoid the ceremony of baptism, they fell into the grave error of making a close or privileged membership, which could not be claimed as a right, on catholic and intelligible principles—a church within a church. If, as Penn says, "a sincere profession with the mouth, of faith in the Lord Jesus as the Christ and Son of God, is enough to entitle a man to communion here and salvation hereafter," it surely made him fit to be received into a visible church; understanding by a church, a body of such men banded together for the propagation of the Gospel and to help one another on their way to Heaven. "Primitive and *Scriptural*

* Yearly Meeting Minute, 1704.

† Swarthmore MSS., Vol V.—Devonshire House Library.

Christianity, in doctrine, discipline, and practice,"* was their definition of the object of the Society's existence.

No one who studies closely the rise of the Society of Friends, in the vast collection of manuscript records of their various churches, can fail to be struck with the *constantly increasing* amount of *secular* business which they transacted. It is true that this was often in an inverse ratio to what we know of their religious prosperity, and the records of the churches which were the great centres of spiritual activity, are often singularly disappointing in furnishing details of the religious movements in which they were engaged.

This can, we think, be accounted for on a far broader historic basis. The religious movement, commencing at Zwickau and Zurich, in the time of Luther, which was ridiculed, grossly misrepresented, and persecuted with relentless atrocity by both Catholics and Protestants, under the name of "Anabaptism," had its origin prior to the Reformation.† The success, however, of Luther's opposition to the Church of Rome, gave vent to the hidden forces which had been at work in almost every part of Europe, and resulted in the rapid spread of the Baptist Societies. As we have already explained, this movement was made use of by the revolutionary party to serve its ends, and two parties of "Anabaptists" were gradually developed.‡ On the one hand, there were those Baptists who held it lawful to use the sword for the destruction of

* See Paper of E. Burrough, on the Church of England.—MSS., Swarthmore papers, reprinted as Appendix to Chapter xv.

† See Erbkam Geschichte der Protestantischen Secten in Zeitalter der Reformation Perthes, Hamburg and Gotha, 1848. Einleitung, page 8, also 479-480. Professor Cornelius looks upon the Continental Baptist movement as purely spontaneous in its origin.

‡ See Note, pp. 76, 77.

what they held to be a perversion of the Christian religion, and on the other hand, those Baptists, of whom the Mennonites were a branch, who, while equally disapproving the union of Church and State, and being equally earnest in their opposition to the anti-Christian errors propagated by the State, believed that all war and all revenge were unlawful to Christians. The one party declined to acknowledge the existing magistracy, or to give them honour, believing that, in a short space of time, Christ would reign in person on earth, and destroy the existing state of things,—the other held that the magistrate was ordained by God, and that the existing state of things would continue, but that the outward government of Christ would commence in the church, and thus extend to the world; but even they forbade their members to undertake any office in the State.* The Early Friends, in one of the earliest MS. documents we possess, allowed their members to undertake offices under the Government. It was ordered: “That if any be called to serve the Commonwealth in any public service which is for the public wealth and good, that with cheerfulness it be undertaken, and in faithfulness discharged unto God, that therein patterns and examples in the thing that is righteous they may be, to those that are without.” The extremes of these two movements may be seen in the Munster Anabaptists and the Mennonites, and something of the same divergence may be seen in England during the period of the Commonwealth. But, however widely dissimilar in the carrying out of their views, there was an idea common to both, which had its root in the fearful persecution to which they were subjected by the State, in the interest of the Church.

It furnishes a curious instance, how the reaction resulting from the forcible propagation of one error, leads inevitably

* See note at end of Chapter.

to the development of partial and erroneous views in an opposite direction. The very errors to which the folly and cruelty of persecution gave birth, again furnished an argument for the support of the Christian religion by the State, and the attempted destruction, by the sword of the magistrate, of all freedom of thought. The idea which resulted from such an abuse of the civil power, was this:—These little Christian Societies thought, that if Christianity were allowed free scope, it would *supersede Civil Government*. Civil Government was in those times rendered so odious and intolerable, by its cruelty and injustice, that we cannot wonder if men longed for the time when Christ alone should reign.* The delays and difficulties of civil suits in those times, for the Anabaptist and the Separatist, surpass all which the most lively imagination can depict. But this was little in their eyes, compared with what they felt to be the anti-Christian practices of the *lawyers*, and the wickedness of the administration of justice which then obtained. Hence the advice of the Apostle Paul to the early Christians, to settle their disputes among themselves, instead of carrying them before the pagan law courts, was not only followed, but the prevailing idea in every branch of the Baptist Societies went far beyond the limits of such an arbitration, and their Societies ordered among their members almost every description of temporal affairs in which it was possible for the most paternal government to interfere.

Since Christ was the only Head of the Church, the rule of Christ was, therefore, to be visibly carried out by the members of the church; and this rule was to put down all authority and power, and supersede the necessity of civil

* The idea of a “Fifth Monarchy,” or the coming of Christ to reign personally on earth, was far more widely spread at the close of the Commonwealth than is generally supposed; there was not a denomination in which the idea did not exist.

government as far forth as *they* were concerned, but not as far as it applied to the world at large.* We must not, therefore, be surprised to see, that whatever the current idea of the period happened to be respecting the province of a good government, it had its reflection in the church. In Germany, among some extreme sections of the Anabaptists, theories of the community of goods were attempted to be carried out,† while among the most intelligent and sober-minded branches of the Baptist church, including the Society of Friends, the registration of births, deaths, and marriages, wills, the education of children, the care and apprenticing of orphans, the support of the poor, the making good loss by fire, the keeping up of fire-engines,‡ the disposition of property on a second marriage so as to secure the rights of the children of a prior marriage; the settlement of every kind of dispute as to property, the

* See curious tract, probably of early Baptist origin, entitled "A Brief Discourse examining from the authority of Scripture and reason, the nature, rise, and end of civil government, &c., with the discovery of the true raine of evil administration of government, and the remedy thereof, propounded to the consideration of wise, conscientious and peaceable-minded men ; and intended as a testimony to Jesus Christ having all power in heaven and in earth placed in his hands, whilst he is putting down all principalities and power, as they are enemies to him that hath such a kingdom to set up," &c. London, Giles Calvert, 1648. The writer very justly remarks, that it is "not by changes of government that those who are governed shall find ease; this blessing must and shall come to us by *the change of our natures.*" We may "change and change again," and still be worse. "An higher Light shall appear," and rule all men by "the force of his inward and most excellent glory." It is true, magistracy or civil government is God's institution, but the *reason of its failure* is that it has "man's institution and authority for its consummation and actual bringing into exercise." The idea is that the *renewed heart alone can administer earthly government aright!*

† Among the Huttites, the person who was baptized gave up his whole property to the community; all labour, and even meals, were in common. The marriages were arranged by the church, the bride being chosen for the bridegroom, and the children were entrusted, shortly after birth, to a church *nurse* (the church was thus literally a nursing mother), and afterwards brought into the common school.—"Geschichte des Munsterischen Aufruhrs," p. 73, C. A. Cornelius, Leipsic, 1860.

‡ See Beck and Ball's "London Meetings."

furniture of houses, the dress of the members, the interference of the church with certain trades: the settlement of differences between husband and wife was sometimes undertaken by the church, and a severe controversy took place among the early Mennonite Baptists in Holland, whether, in case of expulsion of a man's wife from the church, he should not refuse her society, or, *vice-versa*, until he or she confessed his or her fault and was received again into church membership!—the censorship of the press, and finally the relief of the poor, and the provision of handicraft trades for them in seasons of scarcity, occupied the attention of the members of the church.

An attempt to regard these matters as the weaknesses and foibles of the godly, and to pass them over in silence, would be to sacrifice historical truth of great importance to the Church of Christ, to a foolish impression that we of the present day are in any way responsible for, or our respectability and credit in any way involved in, what was done centuries ago. The error lay, not in the development of the idea, but in the idea itself.* The records of the early Independents,† the General and Particular Baptists, as well as the Society of Friends, show this. Many matters in which they interfered, were

* These remarks were penned before the following quotation from Erbkam, in his valuable "Geschichte der Protestantent Sekten in Zeitalter der Reformation," came under the Author's notice in the course of his reading, and he adds them to his MS., to furnish to the reader a proof that the same conclusions have been arrived at, entirely independently, by an eminent German historian, in the case of the Continental Baptist movement, from a generalization of results of a similarly extensive character to his own. He says, that from the idea that the reign of Christ and his saints personally upon earth would shortly commence (an idea which some endeavoured to realize by the use of the sword, because they were disappointed in the fulfilment of predictions fixing the exact year of His coming), resulted another view of the reign of Christ upon earth. The object of the community of believers was held to be "*the perfection of one and all by means of*

* See "Early History of the Independent Church at Rothwell," by H. Glass. Pages 73 to 82.

certainly managed with greater wisdom than that with which any civil government could have handled them. It is a curious picture to contemplate the severe persecution inflicted on these people by the Civil Government, under the idea that their principles were opposed to the interests of good government; while in every congregation the main ends of Civil Government were being enforced on their members. The essential point of the error, was the introduction into church government of *matters purely secular*. “Man, who made me a judge and a divider over you?” said our blessed Lord. When once visible churches began to meddle with matters which had no relation to the propagation of the Gospel, and the edification, and the purely religious oversight of their members, the line was constantly widening (because *all* our outward affairs should be religiously conducted), until the interference of the church was extended to the petty details of daily life, which surely were intended to be left to the conscience of the Christian believer. The extreme instances we will proceed to give, simply illustrate the necessary consequences of the admission of the idea in question into churches, and are not instances due to the weakness and folly of individuals,

a complete Christocracy carried out into life” (see p. 499). Their prohibition to undertake magisterial offices, and to wage war, can only be practically carried out, “if the object of the community of believers is unriddled by supposing the *immediate government of Christ*.—p. 500. “*The necessary result was a severe Church Discipline*. It soon extended itself, *in proportion as the first religious inspiration began to cool*, to the exterior littlenesses of life. Clothing, food and drink, their dwellings and manners, *everything*, was drawn into the circle of *prescribed customs* and severe oversight. Their whole life wore a legal colouring.” (See p. 498.) There cannot be a more striking historical instance given, of the same principle carried out *a century prior* to the religious movement we are describing, and under an entirely different state of society and under very different conditions, producing the *very same result in practice*. It is constantly pleaded that the wise carrying out of a wrong principle will save us from its effects, and men seek to evade the warnings of history, by supposing that what happened long ago cannot concern them!

or of small and weak churches, since they were acts joined in by large bodies of persons of education and respectability, and of high Christian character. The same principles were accepted, and the same results were experienced, over the whole United Kingdom, and in the cases occurring in the Irish churches, it is clear that many of the members occupied positions of public trust and responsibility.*

Not many years after the pressure of persecution ceased, it is obvious that a strong tendency set in among the younger generation, in all the Dissenting churches, to vanity in dress; and we find the Baptists, the Friends, and even some of the Independent churches, † taking most stringent measures to suppress it. The General Baptist church, whose minute is quoted by Taylor, seem to have gone even farther than the Friends, for they agreed “that the soul-condemning sin of pride be *utterly extirpated* and rooted out amongst us, and that *all the discriminating characters* of it, to wit, superfluity in apparel, &c., be *utterly extirpated!*”

From the year 1689 to 1698, we find periwigs in men

“Dublin, 11th of the Third Month, 1688.

* “Whereas we have been a suffering people, because for conscience sake we could not swear, and now it hath pleased God to put it into the heart of the King and Government to use us, in that and in other things wherein we have been sufferers, and so to grant us liberty of conscience in the worship of God beyond our expectation, and also admitting several of us into places of trust, as aldermen, burgesses, and masters of corporations, &c., without our seeking or designing. We, being several of us met together under a weighty sense and consideration of the love of God towards us in these things, do look upon it to be our duty to advise and desire all Friends that are now, or hereafter may be, concerned on such or the like offices of trust, thus they keep strictly to the principles of Truth in their own hearts, which will lead them to discharge their trust faithfully to their King and country in the sight of God, &c.

Signed by order of the Meeting:—

WILLIAM EDMUNDSON.	GEO. GREGSON.	FRAS. RODGERS.
JOHN BURNYEAT.	FRAS. RANDALL.	ANTHONY SHARP.

† Page 75.—“Susan Ponder, for conforming to the fashions of the wicked world.”—
“History of Independent Church at Rothwell,” by H. Glass.

and high dresses in women, the subjects of church censure by the Calvinistic and the General Baptists, and the Society of Friends. In the Society of Friends strenuous measures were taken. In the minutes of the meeting of Aberdeen,* there is a most elaborate description of what is and is not to be suffered, in men and women's dress; the latter is so complete and full of minute correction, that it seems probable that the description was written with an actual model before the writer, which was approved by the church. In 1703, the young women came to York Quarterly Meeting in long cloaks and bonnets, and they were therefore not only ordered to take the advice of the Elders of the particular church to which they belonged before they came to "these great meetings here in York," but in the minutes of one Monthly Meeting it was ordered that those young women who intended to go to York, were *to appear before their own meeting* "in those clothes that they *intend to have on at York!*" †

In 1686, and prior to this, the Celtic mind appears to have proceeded to deal with the question in a more philosophical method. The General Meeting of Dublin appointed

* A Testimony, &c., 28/5/1698.—"Let no coloured plaids be worn any more, but either mantles or low hoods.

"Let none want aprons at all, and that either of green or blue or other grave colors, and not white, upon the street or in public at all, nor any spangled or speckled silk or cloth, or any silk aprons at all. And, dear Friends, we, being persuaded that none of a right spirit will be so stiff or wilful as to prefer their own lusts or wills to our tender sense or advise and labour of love in these things."—Aberdeen Minutes.

† All this care was far from being permanently successful, for in 1720 there is a complete list of female vanities in dress: "quilted petticoats set out in imitation of hoops, cloth shoes of a light colour, with heels; white and red, scarlet or purple stockings, and petticoats made short to expose them."

4th Month, 1703.—As touching wearing bonnets, it is desired "that a question be moved at the Quarterly Meeting, whether any should be worn, yea or nay." It was the sense of the Quarterly Meeting, that "though they might be lawful, it was not expedient to wear them."

meetings of tailors “to see that none did exceed the bounds of truth in making of apparel according to the vain and changeable fashions of the world,” and these meetings of “merchant clothiers and tailors” reported to the church. They very judiciously advised “Friends to wear *plain* stuffs, and to sell plain things, and tailors to make clothes plain.” And also to ensure their wishes, “Friends would do well to employ *Friends* that are tailors, for the encouragement of those Friends of that trade that cannot answer the world’s fashions.” And the church appears thus to have been saved the trouble that their Scotch friends had experienced, in entering the details of Christian simplicity in dress on their church books. This proceeding was so successful, that in 1693 they obtained the aid of the joiners, ship-carpenters, brass-founders, saddlers, and shoemakers, to give their judgment to the meeting “in the matter of the furniture of houses,” &c., &c.—“fine, shining, glittering tables, stands, chests of drawers, and dressing boxes; large looking-glasses, and painting of rooms,” as well as “printed or painted hangings.” Where these latter were *needful*, they would do well to advise with concerned Elders of their meeting before they put them up.

The Overseers of the church travelled over the country. They inspected the shops to see if “needless things were sold,” such as “lace and ribbons.” They inspected the houses, with ornamental “eaves” and of superfluous size, from the drawing-room curtains, with other “Babylonish adornings,” which were declared to be “needless,” to the kitchens, whose array of “shining, needless” pewter and brass pots, pans, and candlesticks, were evidently for ornament, and therefore contrary to the simplicity of the Truth. They remark very truly, that “the mind that goes from God into the world, *desires* and *gets*, and is

never settled nor satisfied." In 1715, some of the young people are spoken of as having "cut off good heads of hair," and put on "long, extravagant, gay wigs." In 1718, although it was evident that the practice of the Overseers visiting the families in every meeting was in full force, the "growing evil of pride," and a "high, uppish, unconcerned spirit" in the young, and some who are old, is lamented, and a special epistle issued; and, in spite of all this care, it can only be said, by the year 1750, that a "faithful remnant still survives;" and worse evils instead of these are found among the youth, and grieve the church, such as "a torrent of libertinism," "intemperance," "gambling, and frequenting play-houses, music-meetings," and "cockfightings."

But more important matters connected with civil life were legislated upon with a *minuteness*, which shows the determination to carry out this idea of the province of a church to its ultimate issue, without flinching from the result; and it must be remembered that the constitution of all these meetings was democratic, and it was on *themselves* that they exercised their laws, submission to which was purely voluntary. While the experiment was proceeding, it was reported, "things are better among us than before this strict and close discipline was established," and it was submitted to without a murmur, as long as their Elders and Preachers were men who were evidently seeking the good of their souls.

No one was to remove from one place to another, without the consent of the church.* Manufacturers of linen and woollen goods were to make their goods "honest and substantial," and since there were great complaints

* Third Month, 1680.—Minutes of Dublin Half-Yearly Meeting.

that such goods were "often made slightly, and so of little service to the wearer," and the parties who should "be guilty of making such goods," and persisted in "refractory non-compliance," were to be excommunicated.* Possibly the present reputation and prosperity of the Irish linen trade is more closely connected with this kind care of the church, than is generally supposed. Figured, flowered, or striped cloth, silks or stuffs, were generally condemned about the year 1693.† In 1702, to prevent the members from "falling into debts beyond what they have to pay" withal, "a strict and diligent inspection into the condition and circumstances of all Friends" was ordered, where there may be any suspicion of financial weakness; and such persons were to give a candid and just account of their substance, debts, and creditors.‡ Lest this should be thought an isolated and special instance, it may be stated, that in the great commercial city of Bristol, a proposition was made in that meeting, to be carried forward to the Quarterly Meeting and thence to the Yearly Meeting, that two or three persons should be appointed in each meeting, and that "every member shall be obliged to give to persons so deputed an account of their circumstances, and that these persons shall inspect the way of living of all persons so professing truth."§ The object of this was to prevent disasters in trade. It was, however, dropped by the Quarterly Meeting.||

The whole life of man, from the cradle to the grave, was legislated for by the church. Nothing was too great or too

* Minutes of Dublin Half-yearly Meeting, 1702.

† In Penketh meeting, a person is ordered to be reprimanded for *buying* such things. 19th First Month, 1694.

‡ Ibid, 1702. § Bristol records.

|| Hardshaw Quarterly Meeting, 20th, Fifth Month, 1697.—Enquiry and inspection into the condition of all traders and dealers is to be continued, and also it is ordered that "a further inspection be made into the concerns and business of Friends, even

small. Everything, from the tenderest years, was found to have a bearing on his eternal interests.* His pocket-money was legislated upon. If his parents were unable to keep him in "orderly government," the church was powerful enough to do it.†

In 1701, the Dublin Half-year's Meeting commenced to interfere with the extent of the education of children:—"Keeping children too long at schools" "occasioneth them to be the more unfit for labour." Leinster Provincee Meeting, at the same date, questions whether it is not "more Christian-like" to cultivate "bodily labour, handicraft

the whole of our Society belonging to this meeting, to prevent all from concerning themselves too much in the things of the world to their own hurt, the evil example of others, and the lessening of the fame of our religion."

In Hardshaw Quarterly Meeting, in 1703, the "visitors" who were appointed to inspect the business affairs of Friends, were ordered to propose the following queries:—

1st. Dost not thou undertake more concerns and business in the world than thou canst respectably manage with respect to thy profession? Do they not obstruct thy growth in the Truth? or hinder thee from answering thy service in thy station? Art thou concerned to serve Truth with thy substance?

2nd. Art thou capable, by thy undertakings, to supply thy family; to maintain a reputable and solid credit, and answer thy duty and service to the Truth as becometh godliness? And art thou content with thy station without seeking great things beyond thy compass?

3rd. Dost thou endeavour to keep thyself from being burdensome to any? Dost thou labour according to thy ability, and not eat the bread of idleness nor live of the labour of others whilst able to do for thyself?

4th. Art thou at peace and concord with the Friends of your meeting, and joinest with them in the services of Truth according to thy capacity?

* The ornaments on his cradle were to be dispensed with. Mothers were to "suckle their children." 1694, National Meeting. "It hath also been recommended to our Women's Meetings causing their "childbed dressings and superfluities of that nature, that things may answer the plainness of Truth's principles both in themselves and their children, from their *births* upwards." "Coffins ought all to be made plain, without covering of cloth or needless plates."—1694, National Meeting.

† In 1695, Friends who cannot keep their children in "orderly government," are to apply to the Monthly Meeting for assistance.

trades and husbandry," than giving children "long schooling," unless it "answer such vocation" as the children are intended for. Numerous schools however, existed, and there was a meeting of schoolmasters who were submissive enough to report, that they were "desirous to receive and put in practice" "whatsoever Friends may have in their minds to communicate to us." In 1705, their anxiety for the "better education of youth is minuted, and in consequence of an increased desire of the church to avoid the contamination of the susceptible minds of their offspring by "heathenish authors," they report their determination to lay aside "Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Terence, Ovid de Tristibus, Ovid's Metamorphoses, Erasmus, Æsop's Fables, Corderius, &c., although they have "*hitherto been used by Friends* for the instruction of youth in the Latin tongue." It was found (after 50 years' use!) that these authors did not treat of things "agreeable to truth," and they consequently substituted "Sententiae Pueriles," "Cato Nomenclatura," "Castalion's Dialogues," the Latin Bible and Testament, "Academia Celestis, or Heavenly University," Robert Barclay's "Catechism and Apology," Buchanan, &c. An alteration in "Lilly's Latin Grammar" * was approved, and 1,000 amended copies ordered to be printed.

The clauses of his deed of apprenticeship, if he were poor, were carefully looked to. If he were rich, his parents were exhorted to bring him up to useful labour. The church exercised a watchful care lest he should fall into sin, by marrying "one of the world's children," or still worse, if he was married to her by a "priest." Occasionally his parents were forbidden, upon pain of

* The standard Latin Grammar of the period.—See Adam Martindale's Life, Chatham Society, p. 12.

excommunication, to give him property unless he repented of his wickedness. The arrangements of his marriage claimed their special attention, and the gravity of marriage in a religious point of view, was enforced both by good counsel, and strenuous efforts that no feasting or gaiety should accompany it.* In the Aberdeen Monthly Meeting Book, on 7th of Second Month, 1674, we find the entry :— “Friends being willing to put Robert Gorden to some employment, have fallen upon these resolutions.” Then follows a formal agreement to teach him a trade, and then pay him by piece work. The man’s wife was during the period supported. In 1717, they order that chaises except when absolutely necessary, are a needless luxury. After this it will not surprise the reader to hear that the food, and gait, and dress of children,† and the deportment of their nursemaids, came under revision.‡ But how the church should interfere with those, who, feeling that there could be no want of Christian simplicity in the cultivation of *flowers*, indulged the eye in “great superfluity and too great nicety in gardens,” we cannot understand. We should have thought that the cultivation of *flowers*, at least was as well calculated to raise the mind heavenward, as that of potatoes and cabbages! Friends were, however, told that “a lowly mind” would rather “admire the wonderful hand of Providence” in causing such a variety of *necessary* things to grow!§ At Aberdeen, in 1707, a person was disowned for “playing at gowff

* The bridesmaids were not to be led out of the meeting by the groomsmen. Hot dinners, &c., were strictly forbidden. Some young people who married, having a *coach*, in 1705, are noticed, and Friends in future are “to come orderly in the fear of the Lord.”

† Castle Dermot, 3rd of Fourth Month, 1710.

‡ Leinster Province, Seventh Month, 1706.

§ Minutes of Leinster Province, Eighth Month, 1705.

and other suchlike games," and breaking his promise to abstain. In 1719, "floor-cloth" was protested against. In 1715, the "fashionable using of tea" was ordered to be "avoided;" "tea-tables" to be laid aside as formerly advised, snuff and snuff-boxes, and the chewing and smoking of tobacco, except when needful, are reprobated. Yet the same records show that there were many devoted and Christian men in the Society, and they appeal to "the rule laid down by Christ," and quote chapter and verse, and tell their members (to excuse their quoting George Fox's writings) that "*everyone* hath a Bible, but not G. F.'s epistles." They use the agency of the church, in 1719, for distributing "a Bible in 8vo. of a good character, and upon good paper," in sheets at 1s. 8d., and recommend their wealthy members to give away a large number to poorer members. They anticipate modern legislation, "killing salmon or trout in the breeding season is pronounced by Brigflatt's Monthly Meeting, in 1705, to be in some degree a violation of the decree or command of God in the beginning, when He blessed them, and commanded them to increase and multiply." It is also contrary to the law of Moses, and also to an Act of Queen Elizabeth's, "to kill salmon and trout, being kipper," and therefore "none of our Society are to kill them at that season." The church frequently advised members about to take a farm, not to "undertake more than" they are "able to manage."^{*} They called upon landlords to be careful not to oppress their tenants by letting lands at high rates.[†] In 1694, Hardshaw Monthly Meeting was

* Penrith Monthly Meeting Records, Seventh Month, 1695. Surrey Quarterly Meeting, in 1786, advised James Carpenter "to give up farming;" and having given the advice for some years without effect, "now feel themselves under no obligation to support him under such burdens as he may bring on himself."

† Leinster Province, Twelfth Month, 1701.

"of opinion that Friends ought to buy and trade with each other," and they also appoint a Committee to inspect the "condition of traders,"* and in 1696, "parents" and guardians of youth are not "to permit them to enter into any public concern or trade without the advice of the particular meeting." In Ireland, members were forbidden to emigrate without first informing the church. In 1733, any person in Marsden Monthly Meeting having "Wolaston's books, that strike at the foundation of the Christian religion by lessening the value or esteem of Holy Scripture," are ordered to burn them. This government was carried out by appointment from time to time of "Overseers," "Visitors," or "Deacons," and they were co-extensive in their powers with the same officers among the General Baptists of the time.† In Ireland seven of these officers were appointed for the whole of Ireland, and to strengthen their authority, they were empowered to summon before them any member, "to give account to them of such matter as may be in any of their minds to propose;" and members were recommended to be "very candid in answer thereto."‡ If we smile when we read some of the practical results of this great experiment in church government, we may yet acknowledge its high and holy aims. We may admire the profound faith it exhibited in the reality of the presence and guidance of Christ, the great Head of the Church. We shall do well to bear in mind that it was carried out on a purely voluntary principle. There was nothing essentially foolish in the conception. It was not only an idea which in its theory might dazzle the loftiest intellect, but one which contains in itself the germ of a living truth. These men believed that Christ would "guide them into all truth,"

* See foot note on p. 143.

† "Taylor's History, p. 435.

‡ Castle Dermot, 1695.

and they desired that all their actions should show to the world that they were loyal subjects of Christ, their King. But when they established a polity which made Christ, in the person of His members, "a judge and a divider" over them in matters which were purely civil, and related to all good citizens as well as all good Christians, they failed in the realization of their theory. In the management of all this curious internal government, the people who carry it out manifest a tender-hearted, yet thorough-going honesty of purpose.

It must, however, be obvious, that under such a system great prominence is necessarily given to members of the church who have *administrative talents*, rather than *gifts of grace* for the edification of the flock and for the propagation of the Gospel. Instead of the pastoral visits paid by the ministers to the "afflicted," the "sick," the "tempted," the "unfaithful or obstinate," whose sole object was to "comfort," "refresh," "convict," "restore," to "soften and fit for reconciliation,"* the "Visitors" appointed by the churches from time to time endeavoured to enforce an outward uniformity. There seems less and less attention given to *spiritual* interests, and the power of church censure seems gradually to have been more relied upon than Christian influence and teaching.

The venerable Margaret Fox (Fell), eight years after her husband's death, raised her voice to warn the Society, for which she had done and suffered so much, against this tendency; as *altogether contrary to the spirituality of the Gospel*. "Legal ceremonies," she wrote, "are far from Gospel freedom; let us beware of being guilty, or having a hand in ordering or contriving what is contrary to Gospel

* See end of Penn's "Preface to Fox's Journal."

freedom; for the Apostles would not have *dominion* over their faith, but be *helpers* of their faith. It is a dangerous thing to lead young Friends much into the observation of outward things, which may be easily done, for they can soon get into an *outward garb to be all alike outwardly*, but this will not make them *true Christians.*"*

* Epistle from Friends to Margaret Fox, Fourth Month, 1698.

NOTE—see p. 485.—We have omitted to notice the refusal of Fox and his friends to take off their hats to Magistrates, Justices, &c. This practice was not new in England. In Bishop Aylmer's time "there were a sort of people"—(like our modern Quakers)—"who counted it idolatry to *pull off their hat* or give reverence, even to princes. These were, I suppose, of the sect of the Anabaptists"—Stype's "Life of Aylmer." p. 176, Ed. 1821. Aylmer was Bishop of London between 1578 and 1594. This practice probably originated from the ideas spoken of at page 485, which were promulgated by the followers of Melchior Hoffman. The German Baptists refused the customary greetings, but whether one of these consisted in taking off the hat is a question to which we have been unable to find an answer.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XX.

A DECLARATION OF SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE IN OR NEAR LONDON, CALLED ANABAPTISTS,
THAT OWN AND BELIEVE THAT GOD'S LOVE IN THE DEATH OF HIS SON IS EXTENDED
TO ALL MEN; AND THAT ARE IN THE BELIEF AND PRACTICE OF THE DOCTRINE OF
CHRIST, CONTAINED IN HEBREWS, v. 1, 2.

Humbly presented to the High Court of Parliament, and the people of this
Commonwealth.

WHEREAS, the people of this nation called (though falsely) Anabaptists, are represented as the only men causing these sad and much-to-be lamented troubles, that hath lately happened in the Commonwealth; and as if they were such who would endeavour the setting up their own interest and religion by taking away the lives, and shedding the blood of others; yea, and as if they were utter enemies to magistracy. These and such like calumnies, being by the tongues of the malicious, or ignorant, cast upon them, think it our duty, being as well as others concerned, to publish to the world our innocence therein, though in this we have peace, that in our consciences we know (the most High God bearing us witness) that in those things we are wholly misrepresented. And truly in this we can rejoice (we knowing ourselves falsely reported) that we should be so accounted, considering that God's people in no age did escape such foul aspersions; for who was accounted the troubler of Israel but Elisha? and who a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition but Paul? We do therefore, in behalf of ourselves, declare (before the Lord, who should we not speak the truth, would be a swift witness against us) to magistrates and people that all men may have a right understanding touching us.

That we have not, neither do we desire, or seek the blood of any; no, not of our greatest enemies that hate us and do or shall despitefully use us: but desire their good as our own, and believe it our duty to seek it by all lawful means we can, desiring to be found followers of Christ, who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them, who accordingly laid down his life for his enemies, and hath commanded us that we love our enemies, and do good to them that hate us. And although we have been represented as men thirsting after blood, and designed to cut our neighbour's throat; we do hereby declare that we are so far from such a wicked thing, and do so much abominiate the thoughts thereof, that the Lord, who is our Record, knoweth that it is upon our hearts as our bounden duty, to assist and defend the nation, this city, and our neighbours as much as in us lie from such violence, against whomsoever they are that shall at any time attempt it, if called thereunto by the magistrates of this nation.

Secondly. We do declare that as for magistrates we own them to be God's ministers, and that they bear not the sword in vain, but have their power given them by the Lord to the end they might be a terror to them that do evil and a praise to them that do well.

Thirdly. We declare that it's our duty, enjoined us by the Lord to submit to them in all things, and to obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, viz., when they shall command things civil and lawful, then in those things actively to obey them; and when they shall command us to do things relating to religion and contrary to the light of our consciences, then (though we cannot actually obey them) we ought (and doubt not through the strength of Christ Jesus our Lord, we shall) passively obey by sufferings and that joyfully, when we are called to it, without resisting.

Fourthly. We believe and declare that it is not our business to meddle with their state affairs, or the government of the Commonwealth unless by them duly called thereunto, further than according to the will of God, to pray that we may live a peaceable life under them with all godliness and honesty.

Fifthly. We declare that the national ministers we disown as not being the ministers of Christ, and their ways and worship, as not the true worship appointed by Christ now in the Gospel; and in particular we declare against their sprinkling infants, and their cruel and inhuman forcing maintenance, by law, or otherwise from any; yet notwithstanding we do declare that we do desire their good, and that they may enjoy common freedom in the nation equal with others.

Sixthly. We believe and declare that all men whatsoever, ought to have their liberty in points of conscience, and no magistrate hath received power from Christ to punish for, or to compel any to this or that form of religion.

Seventhly. We do declare that we ourselves, and all others of what persuasion soever they are if found to walk contrary to the just laws of the nation, ought by the magistrates thereof to be punished, according to the merit of his or their transgression, and not in the least to be tolerated therein.

Eighthly. We believe and declare that we ought not; yea, and that it were sinful for us to maintain our religion by a carnal sword or to assert any spiritual cause or thing thereby.

Lastly. We believe and declare that all the kingdoms of the earth, are by right, Jesus Christ's and his Saints; and that He and they shall one day possess them which shall be the First and Last monarchy upon earth; for which time we wait, as pilgrims and strangers: and do again declare that in the meantime it is our duty to obey the powers that are (as above said) and not to assert his kingly power and authority by any other sword than the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; and do hereby declare against all such as shall so do, as not owned by us in such a practice; so far are we from setting up ourselves or asserting our religion, by taking away the lives or shedding the blood of any.

POSTSCRIPT.

Peradventure some may question why we should publish this declaration seeing there were two published before it; to such we give these reasons for satisfaction:—

First. Because that dated December 12, 1659, we cannot in all things close with, therefore, forasmuch as we who go under the same notion with them of being Anabaptists, thought it our duty to manifest our non-consent with them, in their sewing pillows under the elbows of the ministers of the nation; and their want of boldness to

witness against their Babylonish worship, which is also the reason why we declare against those National ministers, more than against any other.

Secondly. Because, in that Declaration, bearing date December 29th, there is not everything that was upon our hearts to declare; yet this we testify to all men, that what they do declare, we own as a very honest thing, and in nothing dissent from it; but do judge that they have used much plainness, and manifested much fidelity to Jesus Christ; and do bear the same testimony against the first, dated the 12th of December, as they do.

JOHN GRIFFITH.	WILLIAM TOMKINS.	THOMAS HULL.
WILLIAM GURNEY.	EDWARD STEVENS.	RICHARD GROOM.
CHARLES LATHAM.	JOHN BULL.	EDWARD HULL.
WILLIAM DANIEL.	WILLIAM MARTIN.	RANDAL EMERTON.
JAMES EACHELL.	FRANCIS WILCOCKS.	WILL. TOMLINSON.
JOHN FOXWELL.	JOHN HOWARD.	WILLIAM TIDDMAN.
JOSHUA PALMER.	GEORGE COOPER.	MICH. BUTTERFIELD.
WILLIAM WILLIAMS.	THOMAS HINTON.	JOHN RIDAL.
WILLIAM PURVER.	JOHN KNIGHT.	JOHN GRACE.
THOMAS FIELD.		

London : Printed by Thomas Milbourn for Samuel Cleaver, near the Stone Chappel, in Paul's Church Yard. January 14th, 1659.*

* This date is written with pen and ink, on the copy at the British Museum.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FEAR OF "HUMAN LEARNING" AMONG THE BAPTISTS AND EARLY FRIENDS. ITS ORIGIN. DEFECTIVE EDUCATION CAUSES A DIFFICULTY IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF "Lay" PREACHERS. THE BAPTISTS COMMENCE TO EDUCATE THEIR MINISTERS. THE INDEPENDENTS INSTRUCT THEIR "Lay" PREACHERS AT THE CHARGE OF THE CHURCHES. DECREASE OF THE STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. THEIR MINISTERS DECREASE IN INFLUENCE. QUIETISM. THE SUPPORT OF THE POOR BY THE CHURCH EXERTS AN INFLUENCE UNFAVOURABLE TO CHURCH EXTENSION. NEW POOR LAW ESTABLISHED IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. BIRTHRIGHT MEMBERSHIP, AND ITS RESULTS.

ANOTHER principle which exercised vast power over the internal development of the Society of Friends, is one which may also be traced to the influence of the Continental Baptist movement. It is thus expressed by the eminent English Baptist, Samuel How, that "human learning would never make a man a Minister of the Gospel," or enable him to "understand the mind of God in His Word;";* or, in Fox's words, "I saw that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge did not qualify or fit a man to be a Minister of Christ."† No Christian man can deny that this expressed a profound truth, and one which had been practically forgotten; and when it was asserted that a plain, unlettered

* How's "Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching, without Human Learning," 1644, p. 2.

† "Fox's Journal," 1646.

man, through the help of the Holy Spirit, could find the way of salvation in the New Testament, and even explain it to others, to the glory of God and the good of men's souls, the importance and necessity of the assertion in those times, can hardly be over-rated. But when learning was asserted to be a positive hinderance to spiritual religion, when it was compared to "the smoke of the bottomless pit,"* or when it is stated, even by Barclay in his "Apology," that persons who not only were ignorant of Greek and Hebrew, "but who could not read their own vulgar language," and "illiterate men whom God hath raised up to be ministers in His church in this day," could "correct some of the errors of the *translators of the Scriptures*" by the "*certain evidence of the Spirit in themselves;*" without doubting the facts mentioned by the author, which merely go to the point of the *general sense of Scripture* being so clearly understood by these godly persons, that they were *generally right* in their impressions of the meaning of Scripture, we may see that the truth which he and his friends rightly felt to be all important, *had begun to be pushed to a point which must necessarily lead to error as great as that which they were opposing.*

The Ministers in the early Society of Friends appear to have fairly represented all classes, but they included many men of a regular scholastic education. In point of theological knowledge, the early Society possessed advantages which it has never since enjoyed. The publicity which the early preachers courted, the public disputes in which they

* "That when the Lord by His word, the breath of His mouth, hath blown out some smoake of the bottomless pit, which I conceive to be human learning."—Preface to "How's Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching." How, it will be recollect'd, was a Pastor of the celebrated church in Southwark. Fox used language, occasionally, nearly as strong.

engaged, tended greatly to increase their religious knowledge, and to widen their sympathies. It was a training of more value than a college education, in fitting them for the practical duties of their position. But if “being bred at Oxford or Cambridge did not qualify or fit a man to be a Minister of Christ,” and if “Christ makes His Ministers Himself, and gives gifts unto them,”* did it follow that a church must be wrong in giving to persons thus called by God’s ordination to the Christian ministry, *the power of acquiring a good education?* If the principle held good universally, that illiterate Ministers could correct the errors of the translators of the Bible, what was the use of the Hebrew and Greek lexicons which were so diligently sought, in Newcastle and London, for Swarthmore Hall? The error of educating men for the Christian ministry, precisely as for a common profession or calling, without the slightest proof of a change of heart, or that they are called of God to the office, and have gifts either of grace or of intellect for the work, is sufficiently great in itself; but in those days it was rendered intolerable, by the power thus given to the educated minister to enforce his views of truth by the civil sword. Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and colleges, were therefore associated with opposition to the truth of God, and were by the more violent religionists of the time considered to be “of the devil.” There are indications, however, that the reactionary error thus induced, of regarding human learning as something almost necessarily opposed to spiritual religion, was especially calculated to work great injury in those churches who encouraged the development of the spiritual gifts of their members in *a lay or non-professional ministry.* Gifts of intellect are, as fully as

* “Fox’s Journal,” 1657.

spiritual graces, the gifts of the great Head of the Church to His Church, and He will not allow them to be dishonoured. Indeed, it is one of the most convincing proofs of the Divine origin of the Christian religion, that we find it adopts human knowledge, and exalts it by the transmuting power of the Holy Spirit into a Divine gift, to be used for God's glory. While Christianity has given a vast stimulus to the search after truth, human learning has contributed to enlarge our conceptions of Christianity. Christianity again, has used the power which human learning gives, to vindicate and enforce its claims in the field of argument, and the history of Christianity shows, that the attempt to regard intellectual culture as opposed to spiritual religion, has been, in every form which it has assumed, injurious to the cause of Christ. The most blessed results to the Church of Christ, have followed from every attempt to send more labourers into the harvest-field of the world, but the clear apprehension and exposition of Christian truth, is not free from the difficulties which arise from the imperfection of human language. Errors, having reference both to matters of fact and to matters of expression, are rapidly developed and propagated when the human intellect is left uncultivated, even in the most wisely constituted Christian societies. This was soon experienced in both the Arminian (or "General") and the Calvinistic (or "Particular") branches of the Baptist societies. At the second Assembly of the General Baptists, in 1691, complaints were made of persons teaching and maintaining erroneous doctrines. At the Assembly of 1704, it was ordered that young ministers were to try their gifts in private meetings, and should take the opinion of the church; and if unfavourable, it should content them to exercise in private till the Lord should endue them with greater ability for the public ministry. The first

Particular (or Calvinistic) Baptist General Assembly, was summoned by a letter signed by Kiffin, H. Knollys and others. The state of their churches is bewailed, and it is feared that "much of the former life and vigour which attended us is gone." "Congregations languish," and the neglect "of giving fit and proper encouragement for the raising up of an able and honourable ministry for the time to come," is mentioned as one of the main causes. In the fifth Assembly, in 1693, they strongly discourage those, "who being vainly puffed up with their fleshly mind, did presume to preach publicly without being called or appointed thereto;" and the churches are earnestly requested that they "would not send forth nor suffer any person among themselves to preach publicly, of whose qualifications they had not had sufficient trial," that the name of God may not be dishonoured, the peace of the churches disturbed, nor the reputation of the ministry blemished." It is evident that measures had been already taken for the education of their young ministers, and they had to endeavour to quiet a strong feeling that they were dangerously tampering with the ancient Baptist principles respecting "human learning;" and they say, "that we may remove all jealousies, and give satisfaction to all our brethren, there is no intention in the Assembly, in the education of youth, to promote human(e) learning or acquired parts, above, or equal with, the gifts of the Spirit and teachings thereof.—1st. That we abhor such a principle or practice, being satisfied that the gift for edification is a distinct thing from acquired parts, and that men may attain to the greatest degrees of human(e) learning, and yet, notwithstanding, be ignorant of Christ and His glorious gospel. . . . 5th. That the knowledge of the tongues is not itself essential, nor absolutely necessary, to

constitute a minister of the gospel, nor the greatest degree hereof, without the gift for edification, and is not ‘a sufficient qualification for the ministry; neither dare we limit the Holy One, who bestows gifts for edification upon the learned as well as the unlearned.’”

In 1708, we trace the operations of the same difficulty among the Independents. The Association of Churches meeting at Kimbolton, considered the question as to “the best method for encouraging and accomplishment of young men for the work of the ministry, who are *gracious*, and in some measure gifted and inclined that way.—Resolved: That such young men give themselves to reading and study at spare hours—*not laying aside their worldly employ*—that such books as may be useful for the understanding of the signification and acceptation of the Word, &c., be allowed them at the charge of their parents if able, otherwise, at the *common charge of the church*, and that *a teacher* be set apart in every distinct church if it can be; or for want thereof, one or two (related to any of the churches in communion) to be concerned to make it their business a day or two every month (at such places as may be appointed for that purpose) to *examine and instruct such men in the principles of the Christian religion, both as to doctrine and discipline.*”*

It will be seen that at this period, a “Lay” ministry, or one engaged in the ordinary avocations of life, was cherished among the Independents; and they appear to have taken judicious measures for removing the difficulty of the times, respecting its free employment, by fitting it, in the point of religious education, for its duties. The following quotation will show that there was no essential differ-

* Dr. Waddington’s “Congregational History,” vol. ii., p. 163.

ence between the views of the Independents on the calling of the ministry, and those of the Society of Friends, which would destroy the similarity of the difficulty which was common in all the Free Churches :—" To set up a ministry that is destitute of spiritual gifts, is to despise Christ, and utterly to frustrate the ends of the ministry. To set up a ministry which may be continued by outward forms and orders of men only, without any spiritual communication of gifts from Christ, is to despise His authority and care ; neither is it His mind that any church should continue in order, longer or otherwise, than as He bestows these gifts for the ministry." The development of these gifts among the members, was the business of every church. The following sentence might have been written by George Fox, instead of Dr. Owen :—" To erect a ministry by virtue of outward order, rules, and ceremonies, without gifts for the edification of the church, is but to hew a block with axes and smooth it with planes, and set it up for an image to be adored. To make a man a minister, who can do nothing of the proper, peculiar work of the ministry ; nothing towards the only end thereof in a church, is to *set up a dead carcase, fastening it to a post, and expect it to do your work and service!*" *

The conditions were therefore the same, while these causes affected all the Free Churches alike ; and surely some instruction may be received, by comparing the methods they adopted to overcome what may be termed one of the inherent difficulties of the free employment of a " Lay " ministry developed from the congregation ; which was, nevertheless, one of the great sources of their spiritual power.

* " Owen, on Spiritual Gifts," p. 225.

Difficulties of a similar character arose in the Society of Friends. The time of persecution had passed away, but left behind it its mark, in a generation of men whose religious and secular education was greatly inferior to the last. This is evident by the extreme solicitude of the Society for the education of its youth ;* by a vast diminution in the number of books written and read,† and by the increase of weakness of judgment, and a deficiency in sound Christian good sense and feeling, in dealing with church matters.

In all the Dissenting Churches, the effect of persecution had been to isolate them from the general interests and literature of the world around them. In the preceding chapter, we have seen that a tendency to interfere with the

* Also by the rough and ill-trained character of the children, "the rude boyes" at Bristol, tax, as we have shown, the governing power of the Monthly Meeting. In 1691, the boys at Penketh School "bar out" the master, and the Monthly Meeting, as usual, have to interfere. This was an amusement not unfrequent. After the passing of the Toleration Act, we find that the following schools are reported to the Yearly Meeting, for the education of Friends' children :—1 Bristol, 1 Penketh (boys), 1 Warrington (girls), 2 Alton, 1 Ramsey (both sexes), 1 Thornbury (both sexes), 1 Bradley, near Sheffield (boys), 1 Brighthampstead (girls), 2 Hertford, 1 Hogsden, 1 Watford (W. Loddington's), 1 Coggeshall (boys), 1 Colchester (boys)—15 schools in all. About 1705, persons are occasionally imprisoned for keeping schools.—Yearly Meeting Minutes.

In the Bristol School, it is reported to the Yearly Meeting, that "the Holy Scriptures are in a solemn manner read every day."

Signed on behalf of the Second-day's Morning Meeting and the Meeting for Sufferings, by B. Bealing. 2/5/1697.—"To the Friends and Brethren of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of England and Wales.—1st. Recommendation of John Bellers; proposal for a College of Industry, asking for voluntary contributions, suggesting it to be set on foot by joint stock, recommending as of 'good report and example to the nation.' 2nd. The better education of youth, to be instructed in 'languages and sciences,' 'in the way of Truth,' and 'likewise in profitable and commendable labour.' 3rd. 'Encouragement to schoolmasters.' . . . 5th. Inspection of schools."—Bristol MSS.

† In 1713, Sussex Quarterly Meeting complains of the "burden" of books sent down by the Morning Meeting; this meeting having recommended, in 1700, the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and other *good books*, as likely to be very beneficial both in keeping their youth out of "loose, light" company, and would "contribute to their edification and comfort."

home-missionary operations of the Ministers had set in, under the guise of a more refined spirituality than that of the founders of the Society ; and it appears that the charges against the Ministers, of being a kind of hierarchy, with Fox for its arbitrary head, which we have described at some length, originated the suggestion that the various meetings should appoint persons *regularly*, to represent the *laity* in the Ministers' Meetings.* These meetings, we have already seen, were the great source of the aggressive power of the Society, and gave a free development to the ministerial gifts of the churches, a wise application of the preachers to their needs, and complete power over the character of their services.

The Ministers, formerly occupying a position of great usefulness, appear now to be decreasing in power and influence. In the year 1697, we find that six Friends are appointed in Bristol, to represent the church in the Ministers' Meeting, " for the hearing of any matter which may arise respecting either doctrine or practice among themselves ; to exhort, counsel, and advise," so that matters connected with the ministry be ended, if possible, without being brought before the church. It is distinctly stated, that the intention is *not* to place " the power and authority of this meeting in *select persons*," but they are " subordinate " to it, and to continue no longer than thought convenient. Every year there is to be "a new election," or "oftener." It is therefore

* This had been commenced in the northern meetings, earlier than 1706, but the following Minute explains why the appointment of suitable Friends to sit with the ministers regularly, was made :—Sussex Quarterly Meeting, 29th First Month, 1706. " As to the minute made at the last Quarterly Meeting that was held, as concerning Monthly Meetings sending members to assist Friends in the ministry in their morning meeting before the Quarterly Meeting, to prevent the objections of some adversaries, this Meeting, not perceiving any ill consequences, or their objections made in those parts, do think fit to continue the meeting as before."

obvious, that prior to this time the Ministers and Elders were *directly responsible to the church, and in direct communication with it.* As early as 1698, and again the following year, the Yearly Meeting requested the Quarterly Meetings to discontinue and check unapproved ministers. In 1699, in Brighouse Monthly Meeting, we find that "two weighty, understanding Friends" from each church, were to attend the Meeting of Ministers; they were to be persons "who had known the *work of Truth.*" We find the same arrangement commenced at Settle, and it appears to be in consequence of the request of the Yearly Meeting in 1698. They are to give account to the church "from time to time, what satisfaction they have with Friends in the ministry, both as to their life and conversation, and also as to their doctrines." There appear to be complaints of both *Ministers* and *Elders.* In 1704, similar appointments were made at Kendal.

Prior to this, and even subsequently, the Elders of each church had the standing care and oversight of the ministers, who, it will be recollectcd, were to a large extent travelling Ministers; and at the Yearly Meeting of Carlisle, we find that "the Elders appointed for the care and oversight of the ministry" "kept a meeting by themselves," so that if the Ministers thought fit," they could "confer" with them; and in 1711 it is said that this has been "observed for divers years." The Ministers now appear to be placed under a closer oversight. From the position of having "Ministers and Elders whom the Holy Ghost has made Overseers of the flock,"* the flock undertake by deputy to oversee and govern the action of the ministers. Up to this time, and for some time after, the numbers of the Society kept

* Report of Lancashire Quarterly Meeting to the Yearly Meeting, 1696. We have before explained that "Elder," at this period, meant a *Minister appointed by the Church, for certain duties.*

up, and large numbers of the outside world were gathered in. There can be little doubt that education was unequally spread, and that the “lay” preaching which the system of the Society had been so successful in encouraging, was not always developed from the highly educated classes; and that even among this class of persons, their views of what the character of Christian teaching ought to be, were narrower than those of earlier times. The leaven of Quietism had begun to work, and it began to exercise an unfavourable influence on the ministry.

In Ireland, as early as 1698, “long tedious sermons,” “large” and “formal testimonies,” were objected to, and they had already found that their “great profit and advantage” were “more in silent waiting on the Lord.” In 1716, Bristol Meeting complains to the Yearly Meeting of “Ministers going forth in their own wills and preaching what they have heard from others;” and we begin in various quarters to hear the peculiar phrases of Quietism. As will hereafter be described, this phase of religious feeling tended to aggravate the real causes of the declension in active piety and vital religion, which now commenced to be lamented. During the whole of this period, many enlightened and pious men were to be found, who were not wholly blinded by its dazzling sophistry. They saw, for example, that in an age when “books and papers were spread” that have any tendency to create in the minds of the readers the least doubt or question concerning the truth of the Holy Scriptures,* *Christian instruction* was needed, but *how was it to be applied?* Originally more jealous than the Baptist churches, lest “human learning” should

* Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1723. “Vile and corrupt books, as manifestly tend to oppose and reject the divine authority of Holy Scripture, and to introduce deism, atheism, and all manner of infidelity,” are again testified against in 1729 and 1735.

be substituted for the gifts of the Spirit in the things of God, no scheme for the education of those called to the ministry, or for the encouragement of the study of the Holy Scriptures, with a view to a more comprehensive public teaching, could be proposed with the remotest chance of success. This teaching could, therefore, only be applied to their children, and this for the next 70 years seems to have been the great mission of the church within this church. As early as 1732, the movement is perceptible in the exhortation to the assembled churches, "to exert themselves in the wisdom of God, in the strength of His love, to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion as contained in Holy Scripture." "Those sacred writings," they again testify in 1734, do contain the doctrines and principles of our profession." "Preaching and spreading of the Gospel" is still up to this period commended, and the modest suggestion is thrown out, that the members of the churches may help by inviting their "sober and well-inclined neighbours,"—an aim more consistent with Quietism than that of the vigorous evangelistic preaching of Fox and his coadjutors, which was addressed to the "wickedest people in the country." In 1724, Kent reports to the Yearly Meeting that meetings are much reduced, which they attribute "in some measure" to the want of a lively and spiritual ministry amongst us;" but they add a few significant words which show the working of the new leaven, "but we hope there's those amongst us *come further* than to have their dependency in *words*:" "nevertheless," they plaintively acknowledge, "a living and spiritual ministry" is "very comfortable and edifying, "both to saints, "those who are settled and established in the Truth," and sinners who "frequent or accidentally drop into our meetings."

Many of the churches, not having learnt the new lesson of a spirituality so high as to be beyond “dependency on words,” complain to the Yearly Meeting of a deficiency in the amount of travelling ministry. In 1738, the Yearly Meeting endeavours to console the churches who, we have seen, were lamenting the decline in both the quantity and quality of the ministry supplied to them, by applying the principles of Quietism to the emergency. “When together” (*i.e.*, in their meetings), “we exhort Friends to feel their minds abstracted from visible objects into a true stillness and nothingness of self.” This will give them “a true *relish* and *savour* of the ministry of those who are rightly concerned,” &c. The result of this want of sound Christian instruction, in the ministry, at a time when rationalistic preaching, teaching, and controversy were rife in the outside world, was apparent in 1740, when the Yearly Meeting avows its opinion that “the apparent declension, in our time, of true piety and godly zeal in many places (*i.e.*, in the Society), is owing to a disregard of the doctrines of Holy Scripture.” Instead of all earthly things being to the Christian a means of serving the blessed Redeemer, who prayed, not that His disciples should be taken out of the world, but kept from the evil by the power of His Holy Spirit, the churches are told that “the manifestation of the Spirit” “calls for inward retirement, an abstraction from *earthly objects imaginations and attachments*; for in the silence of all that is of the flesh the still small voice of Truth, the Divine Word nigh in the heart is heard,” and by hearing with due observance (that is of the word nigh in the heart) true faith is produced, “for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by (Christ) the Word of God” (Rom. x. 17). (Epistle of the Yearly Meeting of 1770). The Apostle is speaking of the word *preached*, and the necessities

of Quietism compel the Yearly Meeting to deprecate the preaching of the Gospel, and to misapply the plainest declaration of the Apostle Paul, who asks, "How can they hear without a preacher?"

In 1789 worship, instead of being a delight to the Christian, became "an awful duty;" while in 1795, although the dry bones had already commenced to move, and it was necessary to caution all against "the unsubjected activity of their own spirits," the language of unmistakeable Quietism is adopted by the Church. "Study to be quiet and mind your own business, remembering that the spiritual Jerusalem is a quiet habitation, and that to lead a holy and unblamable life among men is to contribute, in the degree in which He approves, to the advancement of true reformation in the earth." In fact, the Friends advocated the reversal of the precept of the Apostle, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

The plain "Query" of ancient times, addressed by the Yearly Meeting to its subordinate churches, "How doth Truth prosper?" Meaning, are your churches in a flourishing condition, is changed to "How do Friends prosper in the Truth? exhibiting the distinctive feature of Quietism, a morbid introspection; more anxiety being shown about *the internal feelings* of the individuals composing a church, than about the salvation of sinners and the gathering of them into the visible church.

We find, universally, in the records of the Society at this period,* less about preaching the Gospel to the world, and more respecting the duty of being "lights to our neighbours" in outward conduct. True religion was never perhaps at a

* Bristol Quarterly Meeting Records.

lower ebb, than during the period from 1713 to 1739, when the Wesleys and Whitfield commenced preaching. This has been ably and forcibly described and aptly illustrated, by Thomas Jackson, in his "Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism." This, also, was the period of the great Rationalistic Controversy. The names of Shaftesbury, Collins, Woolston, and Tindal, as well as of other deistical writers, will recall to the mind of the reader the fact, that the whole Christian Church was occupied in *defending itself*; and while doing so they fell into the error of regarding Christianity mainly as an intellectual creed, a scheme of morality and an aid to virtue.

Between 1695 and 1730, *only one Episcopal church building had been erected in London and its neighbourhood.* The total number of Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist churches, between 1715 and 1716, is given by Neal at only 1107, out of which 247 only were Baptist churches; while the number of the meetings of the Society of Friends could not be fewer than 400. From the year 1719, the date of the Salters' Hall conference, Unitarianism spread to so great an extent among the Presbyterian churches, that nearly the *whole denomination* was *extinguished*, and the Unitarians became a distinct body of churches in England. It would be an error, therefore, to suppose that the state of the Society of Friends at this period, was either unique, or solely brought about by the operation of internal causes. The Society was now, however, roused to the necessity of action. The question we have to consider is, whether their efforts at internal church reform were wisely directed. We shall also enquire what were the antecedent causes of this peculiar development of church action, and exhibit the consequences to the Society, of the mistakes then made. The lessons of the past, if wisely considered in so

important a subject as that of the history of *a perfectly free and self-governing religious Society*, can hardly be without instruction to the visible Church of Christ.

We must here pause, to carry back the reader in the order of time. We have already alluded to the general tendency in the Dissenting churches, after the passing of the Act of Toleration in 1689, to discourage anything like obtrusive acts of religious propagandism. In the Society of Friends there was an additional cause, which was slowly but surely operating in the direction of discouragement of the bold aggressive preaching of the travelling Ministers of the Society. It must be obvious, that the purity of the religious motives, and the strength and fervour of the conviction of men who left their trades and their families to preach the Gospel to the world, and who received at most, either their travelling expenses or their bare support only, from the Church, tended to give them great place among *the poor*.

Perhaps there was no feature in Fox's character more strongly developed, than his strong conviction that the neglect of the poor in the times in which he lived, was a disgrace to Christendom. He laboured not only in his public ministry and by the press, but he petitioned Parliament to this effect:—"Let all the poor people, blind, and lame, and cripples, be provided for in this nation, that there might not be a beggar in England, nor England's dominions." He tells them that the practice of the Jews and the early Christian church, "doth condemn this nation's practice," where there are "so many beggars." He suggests that "neither beggar, nor blind people, nor fatherless, nor widows, nor cripples, go a begging up and down the streets, but that a house may be provided for them and meat," and tells them to "mind Christ's

doctrine.”* “ You that are called Christians,” he writes, in an address to the Protector and Parliament,† “take heed and see that there be no beggars amongst you.” “ Want often brings them to steal.” They that are rich should “ prevent temptation, or take them into some employment ; and this shows the nobility of the Christian’s life.” A suggestion was also made for a *Government registration of employers requiring labour*, and the *workmen out of employ in every market town* : a plan which appears to us to be well worthy of consideration even at the present time, and might be carried out in connection with our Post Office arrangements. Like the Continental and early English Baptist churches, those founded by Fox, from their rise, made collections for the relief of the poor widows and fatherless, and found them employment and gave them education. These benefits were also frequently extended to all who attended their meetings.‡ We have before mentioned the application to the magistrates in Bristol for help, before a poor person was relieved. Another case is noted in Penketh Monthly Meeting, where all persons who were a pecuniary “charge” to the meeting were, before receiving it, *required to give up all their property.*§ In many cases money was lent from the church fund, to help necessitous persons to engage in business.||

* “The Parliament of the Commonwealth of England,” 1659, pp. 9 and 13.

† “To the Protector and Parliament,” 1658, p. 18.

‡ “Fox’s Journal,” General Meeting of Skipton, 1660.

§ “Shall first resign all they have to Friends.”—Penketh Monthly Meeting, 14th Second Month, 1698.

|| “Rebecca Russell, of Bedminster, laid before the Women’s Meeting her distress. Her husband has left her, and she is destitute, with four children, and asks the loan of £20 ; she can earn her livelihood by baking cakes and selling ayle.”—Bristol Minutes, 1694. In Surrey Quarterly Meeting, they “mend Ann Thornton’s oven,” and supply a Friend with “twenty shillings towards fatting his hog.” They remitted a debt to the Monthly Meeting from one of their members, “being satisfied that money is somewhat scarcey with him.”

Originally this was simply the application by the deacons, of the free-will offerings of the church, but in 1710 a complete poor law was framed in the Yearly Meeting for the Society. No poor person receiving relief was allowed to remove without the consent of the meeting, and a certificate to the meeting where they were about to remove. Provided this meeting received money from them for the use of the church, or "put them into any service of the church," it was "deemed a settlement," and if they behaved themselves "according to Truth" and were not chargeable for three years, they were also to be "deemed to belong to the meeting within the compass of which they shall inhabit." "Servant men and maids," after one year's faithful and honest service, were to be deemed to *belong* to the meeting to which they removed. In default of the regular papers being produced by a necessitous member, which, if he acted contrary to the advice of his meeting, they might refuse to give, the meeting to which he had removed had a *claim* to be reimbursed by the meeting *from* which he had removed, unless he had been "denied" by this church. This was found so onerous, that in the following year it was agreed that the meeting to which he had formerly belonged was to reimburse only *half* the charges; and the person who had removed contrary to his friends' advice, was to be *desired to return* at the cost of his former meeting, and they were to support the said poor person.

In 1721, for the purpose of the poor law, the Yearly Meeting defined a *member* as one who "was not denied" by his monthly meeting! In 1737, this poor law was expanded into ten sections. The provisions were substantially the same as the above, with a clause by which the meeting into which the poor man removed, might send in their bill of charges for his relief to *any* meeting where he

had formerly resided, and to receive immediate payment; leaving the various meetings who were sufficiently unfortunate to have had the poor man sojourning with them, to settle the last place of his having effective membership. These poor laws produced an amount of dissension and ill-feeling, which cannot readily be conceived. The writer has seen letters from one church to another, filling sheets of foolscap with disputes as to matters of law and of fact, in which sometimes Christian charity was altogether violated. The consequences of this enactment were most disastrous to the Society of Friends. Their support of the poor was liberal enough, but this law struck at the spontaneous springs of Christian liberality. The poor were lowered in the eyes of their fellow Christians, and from endless disputes as to *what* meeting a poor family belonged to and was chargeable to, the poor, instead of being, as they had been, the strength and glory of the Society as a Christian church, became associated with the annoyance which these inevitable disputes engendered.

It was in connection with these poor laws that the famous definition of membership, which has been called "Birthright Membership," arose. The following clause occurs in this poor law of 1737 :—"All Friends shall be deemed members of the Quarterly, Monthly and Two-weeks' Meeting, within the compass of which they inhabited or dwelt, the 1st day of the Fourth Month, 1737;" and "the wife and *children* to be deemed members of the Monthly Meeting of which the husband or father is a member, not only during his life, but after his decease." For the purposes of the poor law they could *claim* relief as members ! Here we have the direct effect of the introduction of *secular* matters into the churches, and also a practical illustration of the evil effects of making such matters the subject of

church action. The experience of the Society of Friends would sanction the view, that such matters are better left to the spontaneous liberality of individuals. A pecuniary *liability* was thus attached to an increase of members in a Christian church, and an additional reason was thus furnished for *curtailing the strong Home Missionary element*, which was an instinct with the body of Ministers developed from the congregation, when they enjoyed the position and liberty of action we have described.

CHAPTER XXII.

INTRODUCTION OF “RULING ELDERS” IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. BAXTER’S “PRIVATE” OPINION RESPECTING THE “Lay Elders” OF THE PRESBYTERIAN SYSTEM. HE WOULD NOT CALL THEM “DUMBE DOGGS.” NEW “OVERSEERS” APPOINTED IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. TESTIMONY OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TO THE VALUE OF THE TRAVELLING MINISTRY OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. LETTER OF JOHN FRY TO THE MORNING MEETING. THE POSITION NOW OCCUPIED BY THE MINISTERS. JOHN WESLEY’S OBSERVATIONS ON “Lay Elders.”

THE Society of Friends had now been aroused to the necessity of some action to arrest symptoms of decline and decay. This action was two-fold; first, with reference to the Ministers, and secondly, with regard to the congregation. We shall proceed to describe the changes which took place in the Society with reference to the Ministers. The old generation of Ministers had now died out; the younger class of Ministers now claimed the attention of the church. There seems little doubt that there was an *increasing inequality* in the *education* of the members of the Society. The legislation of the Society now tended to give effect to the views of the religionists who had formerly opposed Fox and his coadjutors. A series of measures found favour, which gradually deprived the Ministers of the important position which they occupied in the early

Society. The tendency of the Society's regulations to give a prominence to persons who had a talent for secular legislation, rather than for gospel labour, continued and increased.*

In 1727, the thin end of the wedge was applied, by the appointment of persons who were somewhat similar to the Presbyterian "Lay Elders." These functionaries, when attempted to be introduced as part of the State Church system of the Commonwealth we have before shewn, were denounced by the so-called "Sectaries" in unmeasured terms; and so unpopular was this innovation in England, that the attempt was eventually abandoned. Baxter did not side with his party on the subject of the introduction of "Lay Elders." His "private opinion," supported "by the concurrent judgment of so many learned men," was "that neither Scripture nor antiquity did know" such officers as "Ecclesiastical Elders" distinct from "Teaching Elders;" that he did not approve of them as "assistants to the Ministers" in their ministry, and adds, that on the side of the Episcopalian, they had allowed Lay "Readers," "*ever since the Reformation in England,*" who, in the absence of a clergyman, were even "allowed to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper:" and on the side of the Presbyterians, while they were anxious to establish "Lay or Ruling Elders," he would not quarrel with either party about "the notions or titles,"

* In answer to the question, "How many have declined in their love to God and zeal for His Truth?" and to explain "the cause of it," an able and intelligent Minister, who lived in the period of which we are treating, gives as a principal reason, "Formality in the management of Church affairs," and by church members "acting too much as *men by their own wisdom and parts*," which never gives a true concernment for the Church's good; and formality "in public worship." This tends to show that the management of the church had fallen into the hands of a different class of persons.—Page 18, "Address to Friends," 1768, by John Fry.

while an agreement could be come to on both sides about the “work to be done,” nor would he “reproach them with the name of ‘Dumbe Doggs’ on one side, or Lay Elders (as dumbe) on the other side.”* The early Friends, in common with the other Separatists, were accustomed to apply the description in the 55th Chapter of Isaiah, of the watchmen of the house of Israel as “dumb dogs” who “cannot bark,” “sleeping, lying down,” &c., “greedy dogs which cannot have enough,” “shepherds that cannot understand,” “all looking to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter,” to the non-preaching Ministers in the times of the Anglican Establishment; while in the early times of the Commonwealth and the Presbyterian State Church, these terms were applied to the same class of clergy who conformed to the Directory, whether Anglican or Presbyterian, and also on similar principles to pluralists and lay elders. The whole force of the objection was that, under the Christian dispensation, “shepherds” or “watchmen” who did not *preach or teach the gospel*, had no place.

If some of these expressions in the tract literature of the times seem to us harsh and uncharitable, it is needful to bear in mind that the times in which they wrote, and the persecutions they suffered, furnish some excuse for the language used, particularly when we recollect that *the most godly and highly educated men* did not scruple to use expressions which we should now consider a disgrace to the lowest strata of society. It was eminently a period when the love of their neighbour was considered to consist with the virtue of speaking plainly to him.

It is a most instructive fact in Church history, that the

* Page 5, “Christian Concord.”—Baxter’s Reply to the Propositions agreed upon by the Associated Ministers of the County of Worcester.

gradual admission of the same principle of Church membership as that of Presbyterianism,* in a religious Society perfectly freed from all State interference, gradually led to the introduction of the system of "Lay Presbyters," or "Ruling Elders;" and we now see a kind of Presbyterianism evolved in the Society of Friends, who were originally the uncompromising opponents of the whole system. The key to the denunciations of the newly-established Presbyterian State Church and their Ministers by the early Society of Friends, will be found to turn, as we have already shown, on the circumstance of "the church" not being a church gathered *out of the world* on New Testament principles, but one avowedly, by its very constitution, and especially by its connection with the State, bound to be a "worldly" or "carnal" church. Its connection with the State appeared to them to be a high-handed denial of the spirituality of the gospel of Christ, a forcing of the consciences of Christian people, a use of the "carnal" sword of the magistrate to the destruction of the essence of the Christian religion. The "calling" of their ministers, the nature of their congregations, their communion in the Lord's-supper, their singing, their limiting their sermons by the hour-glass, the church bells; all were "carnal," and for this reason and no

* "The visible Church, which is also Catholic or Universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law) consists of *all* those throughout the world that profess the true religion, *together with their children*, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation."—"The Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly, &c." Chap. 25, Art. 2. "Not only those that do actually profess faith and obedience to Christ, but also the infants of either one or both believing parents, are to be baptised. Baptism is a sacrament, &c., not only for the solemn admission of the party baptised into the visible Church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ," &c. The grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that Grace belongeth unto, &c.—*Ibid. chap. 28, Art. 4, 1, and 6.*

other.* The change seemed to be a trifling one in the Society of Friends.

In 1727, a proposition from Wilts, which we shall recollect was one of *the strongholds of the party who opposed Fox and the early preachers*, suggested that "serious, discreet, and judicious Friends, who are *not* Ministers," should "be appointed in every Monthly Meeting, tenderly to encourage and help young Ministers, and advise others, as they shall in the wisdom of God see occasion, and that where there are meetings of ministering Friends, such Friends so chosen be admitted as members of such Meetings of Ministers, and act therein for the good purposes aforesaid."† The next Yearly Meeting we find an epistle issued specially to Ministers who, we now hear, in some cases, were "very unsound," and they are warned that "misquotation and misapplication of Scripture," "tones and gestures" in their sermons, "render such a ministry *contemptible*." In 1731, they are exhorted that they "show themselves" not merely ready, but "*as ready* to hear and receive advice from their Monthly Meetings, as well as teach and instruct!" The

* Innumerable quotations might be given of this point from the Early Friends' tract literature. "Thou wouldst compare the church who are gathered out of the world, the saints, to be like the world." "How darest thou compare *them* (the world) with those that live and dwell in the grace of God." Page 20, "Answers to Queries," by Thomas Atkinson, of Cartnell in Lancashire. Geo. Fox, and R. Hubberthorne, 1653. Also p. 100, "Reply to Robert Lucas' Queries." "Thou asketh, how long it (the Lord's supper) shall continue?" This bread and this cup shall continue for ever in the Church. It is so, "As oft as they eat of this bread and drink of this cup they show forth the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. ii. 26. But friend, what hast thou to do to talk of this who art in the generation of *them* that are enemies to Christ. This style of writing is ignorantly taken to be mere railery, but the attentive and candid reader will find the reason, merely in the fact of the person preaching within, or supporting the State-supported Church, which claimed all men wicked as well as righteous as members, and persecuted all who dissented from it. Precisely the same reasoning applied to the Independent Ministers who accepted State aid and joined with the Presbyterians on the New England model of Independency.

† MS. Minutes of Yearly Meeting.

irritation caused by the appointment of the new officers "to advise" the Ministers, may perhaps be traced in the record of the fact, that some, "instead of preaching the Gospel, preach their own resentments."* In 1735, the Yearly Meeting decided that the Ministers' Meetings had "no right to disown any minister or other person in any capacity whatsoever."

In 1738, a manuscript book of Rules for the conduct and guidance of the churches, was sent down from the Yearly Meeting to each Quarterly Meeting, consisting of quotations from its minutes and "Christian and brotherly advices given forth from time to time by the Yearly Meetings in London, alphabetically digested under proper heads." This was the commencement of the present "Book of Extracts," and is the starting point of a new era in the history of the Society.

The high ideal of "the kingdom of Christ" upon earth, as exercised by the members of His mystical body, had become in sober fact, more than ever "a kingdom of this world," and from henceforth, the secularization of the Society rapidly increased. They had so much work to do within their borders, that any aggressive action for the spread of simple Christianity in the world was almost impossible, and their new organization rendered the Society comparatively unfit to cope with the changing circumstances of the country. In 1752, the Yearly Meeting urged the appointment of "Overseers of the flock," who are "intreated to enter into and discharge this labour with a ready hand." In early times, the preliminary dealing with delinquents had been largely left to the Ministers who were "Overseers of the flock;" now, the work is taken from them, and handed over to secular officers who will perform it in a more

* Minutes of Yearly Meeting.

summary manner. From this period we find a method of dealing with delinquents, which appears to have had more of legal severity than of Gospel tenderness. The Society was now to be reformed, by the ejection from it of a large number of members who had not sufficiently profited by their birthright in it. In 1753, the organization of Ministers' and Elders' Meetings was completed, by a central Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders being appointed in London for the first time. Sympathising with the desire for the regeneration of the Society by means of a more elaborate and powerful discipline, *the women* asked for a central synod, to assist in "the needful reformation and regulation in our discipline." There was, they stated, "a noble spirited remnant of our sex raised up," who would help the church in its difficulties. And in 1766, a Yearly Meeting of Women Friends was again proposed, but declined, owing to the doubt whether there were a number large enough and "of sufficient abilities to carry on so weighty and important a work." The lady Friends persevered in their determination to obtain the power they desired, and it was finally constituted in 1784.

In 1764, the subject of admission to Membership was considered by a Committee of the Yearly Meeting. The only result of this Committee was negative. The re-assertion of the necessity of a public profession of faith in Christ, and an examination by the Church whether or no the walk of the applicants was agreeable to their profession, was not thought needful; but merely "innocency of life and conversation," and "convincement of the truth of our religious principles," instead of the "conversion" of heart and faith in Christ, insisted on in early times.* The idea that the principles

* See "An Epistle to Friends, showing the great difference between a *convinced* estate and a *converted* estate, and between the profession of the Truth and the possession of it." By John Banks, 1693. See page 361 of this work,

of the New Testament should be consulted in the reconstruction of the Society, seems hardly to have occurred to the generation which effected it; and so loosely defined were the duties and responsibilities of the new "Elders" and "Overseers,"* that in 1789, enquiry was made from Warwickshire Quarterly Meeting, held at Birmingham, whether "the office of "Elder" and "Overseer" be *one and the same* under different appellations, or *two distinct* services; or whether Overseers (under that appointment only) are members of the Meetings of Ministers and Elders; "for," said they, "it is the unanimous sense and judgment of this meeting, that it is highly requisite that such Friends as are appointed to responsible stations in the religious Society of Friends (the word "church" is noticed to have become obsolete) to understand *fully and explicitly the purposes of their appointment!*" This was answered by a reference to former minutes, which, as we have already seen, still imperfectly described the duties of these officers, and did not make them strictly *accountable* to the church for performing their duties wisely and well, nor did it provide for a frequent re-election.

The measures of reform which were then taken by the Society of Friends, may, in their practical effects, be thus shortly described. The strength of the early Society of Friends, as a Church, consisted in the full recognition of a most important principle, acknowledged by all the voluntary churches in the Commonwealth times; viz., the free development of the gifts of the members of a church in preaching the gospel. The scriptural principle of "the ordination of Ministers," according to Fox, consisted in "God choosing His own Ministers Himself." The Church did not appoint

* They were eventually made life officers.

Ministers, but simply assumed a power of judging whether this or that man was or was not "called of God" to preach His gospel, and he exercised his office with the approval of the Church, and was strictly accountable to it. The time and place of its exercise were arranged by the Ministers among themselves; the oversight of the ministry, and the entire arrangements of religious worship and instruction rested, subject to the approval of the Church, in their hands. The employment of what Richard Claridge when a Baptist, calls "mechanick preachers," the recognition of the principle that a man may follow a secular trade, and yet possess the "gift" of preaching as opposed to "the art of preaching" without the gift,* has been universally attended by the difficulty of *directing* and *controlling* such a band of men and applying their labour in quarters where it is likely to be successful. England has produced one "converted Tinker," whose ministrations, crystallized as it were, in the form of his "Pilgrim's Progress," still tend to the delight and profit of both the highly cultivated and the most ignorant; but it is not every tinker who is a Bunyan. But it would be entirely contrary to the experience of the Christian church, to conclude that it is desirable to *shut out* persons who follow a trade and like the Apostles labour with their hands, from ministering to those whose education and habits of thought fit them to receive benefit from their ministrations. The great danger of the Christian Church has not arisen from the use of such preachers, but from the tendency of a professionally-educated ministry to develope something of a hierarchical character, unless their election rests entirely with the Christian people. The case of the Society of Friends is that of a gradual failure to carry out satisfactorily and permanently such

* See "A Plea for Mechanick Preachers," &c., 1727.

a scheme of "lay" preaching, and provide by it for all the needs of their churches. But this partial failure is one which rather points to the importance and absolute necessity of such a Ministry to the Christian Church, and the possibility of our receiving and applying the lesson so as to provide for its perpetuation and increasing usefulness.

In 1681, certain members of the laity of the Church of England published the following circular:—"We find that divers and several of those people called Quakers are also very good Christians, and preach true doctrine according to Holy Scripture; and we therefore declare that it is our opinion that such a voluntary ministry, to preach on free cost as aforesaid, is of excellent use and exceeding necessary to be allowed of in the Church of England, not only in preaching to poor people in poor tabernacles, who cannot pay anything sufficiently to maintain a ministry, nor yet get pews in their parish churches, but also it makes the learned clergy to be the more sober and studious in their places, and therefore we can think no other but that such *voluntary ministers* are *sent of God*; for we remember the Apostles were working men, of several trades as these are, yet we do not believe God sent these to hinder the clergy of maintenance, but only to season them as salt seasons meat. In great parishes there is need to be at least two congregations; the parish church for the orthodox minister and the rich, and a tabernacle for the lay prophets and the poor."* We have here the unprejudiced testimony of the value to the country at large of the circulating or travelling Ministry established and developed by Fox and the Early Friends. As we have already explained, this was applied by the machinery of the Ministers' Meeting.

In the records of the Ministers' Meeting in London, a letter

* Quoted in Dr. Waddington's "Congregational History," first edition, p. 615.

exists which throws the clearest light upon the effects of the appointment of the new officers who were then appointed to have the charge of the ministry, and who were eventually called "Elders."*

An eminent Minister of the name of John Fry, of Sutton Benge (who was appointed Clerk, or President, of the first Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders constituted under the new regime in 1754), and author of a number of works, some of which reached a third edition, addressed a letter, in 1765, to the "Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders," which formed a kind of standing meeting of the Ministers for the whole Society. He states, that he went at the usual time to the London Ministers' Meeting on the First-day morning, and found that not a single minister attended! "I went away," he says, "disappointed and sorrowful, reflecting on the flourishing state of that meeting when I first attended it nearly forty years since (*i.e.* two years before the introduction of lay 'Elders' after the Presbyterian model), when it consisted of *Ministers only*, who met together with hearts full of concern for the edification of each other; and when any Friend found drawings of mind, or even a freedom to go and sit in any (particular) meeting in the City or near it, it was their frequent practice to call upon a younger Minister to bear him company. Thus," he says, "they were helped and encouraged to faithfulness according to the measure of the gift received, to their great advantage and improvement, and to the great comfort and joy of each other, and then the least slight or mean esteem for each other was scarce known among them; but alas! since 'Elders' have been added as members of that meeting, to assist, the end hath not been fully answered: perhaps from

* This word being used in distinct senses in the early and the modern Society, produces much confusion.

their being inexperienced in the various exercises and conflicts which young Ministers pass through in their first engaging in that solemn work, and therefore not capable of sympathizing with them." He says, these new functionaries "sometimes reproved too hastily," and that the younger Ministers were exposed to hasty and uncalled for criticism, and that persons who were "fond of" such a task "cannot be *right*" themselves. The "love, harmony, and condescension of the greatest and worthiest" Ministers to "those of low degree" and "small gifts," was admirable. "The most favoured of the Lord," like the Apostle Paul, were apt to think themselves "less than the least of all saints, and were the most humble." "Then," he says, "the Church edified itself in love, building one another up in the most holy faith." Then the "numbers" of the Ministers increased, and the meetings were attended "by a hopeful succession," who received every "reasonable encouragement from their elder brethren." Now there was "lukewarmness and indifference, with a want of love and brotherly affection," of "the charity which suffers long and is kind." These fruits of the Spirit, he remarks, are not *now* always found even among those "of religious sentiments, men of strict integrity and of clear lives." Such men may also have clear views of religious truth, but for all this, it does not follow that they are "in that state baptized by one Spirit into the one body of Christ." When this "one baptism is experienced," "membership in the one mystical body" of Christ is attained, and "there will be a fervent labour and travail of soul for every member in the body, for the least as well as the greatest."

These newly appointed officers had "forgotten the express terms of their appointment, viz., to help and encourage young Ministers." Instead of this they reproved them in

"a mistaken zeal," without "sympathy;" and to this he "attributes the present low state of your meeting." The younger Ministers being thus treated, he says, will not attend. There is "a state of infancy and childhood" even in the ministry. This "church," he tells them, "was at first gathered by a living and powerful ministry," and now the Society and its rulers begin to think that "the situation of things is altered, and that it can *now thrive and grow and become fresh and green without it!*" "Are we ashamed of the foolishness of preaching which was so effectual in the primitive times?" he asks. "As in the Lord there is no variableness neither shadow of turning," and as the Truth is unchangeable, *so the work and operation of the Divine Spirit must ever be the same in all ages*, and attended with the *same effects*, and leads to and qualifies for *different services*, as ministry, exhortation, &c. If sympathy and encouragement of the warmest kind be not extended to young Ministers, and some of the deficiency of their ministry borne with, "from whence," he asks, "is the church to be supplied with able Ministers?" The most eminent and the older Ministers "are more qualified than "Elders" can be, "to strengthen the weak and to lead" the younger Ministers forward, and thus "the church would be supplied with able Ministers." The younger Ministers would "come with pleasure to receive any counsel which may be given them in love from such persons," and thus "true love and perfect harmony would be *restored.*" Towards the close of this informing letter he reminds them, that "as the harvest is truly great, and *thousands remain ungathered to the saving knowledge of God,*" they should "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more labourers into His vineyard." We find from the reports of the Meeting of Ministers and Elders in London, in 1757, that under the new system of government, the

Ministers were (in nearly all the Quarterly Meetings) very "few," which fully confirms the foregoing statement.

In 1735, it had been ordered that the "Morning Meeting" (*i.e.*, the central and standing meeting of Ministers and Elders) or any other such meeting, "had power, *without* being accountable to any Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, to advise, exhort, or rebuke any Minister;" a measure which virtually placed all the Ministers of the Society under the control of the Lay Elders, who soon *greatly exceeded the total number of Ministers to be overseen*. No church officers could have been more worthy of the trust and confidence of the Church, than Ministers who, during the period of which we are speaking, supported themselves for the most part by their own labour, and only asked from the Church a bare support during the period in which they travelled from church to church. They could truly say, "We seek not *yours*, but you." It was obviously impossible for the Ministers to object to the Elders who were appointed to oversee them, and such a circumstance as the suspension of an Elder from his office for the improper execution of his functions, was almost unknown. The opinions of men will always differ as to the value, or concerning the character of the sermons they hear, and there are few of the most gifted preachers who would be prepared to accept the opinion of two or three practically irresponsible persons instead of the whole body of Christian people. These care-takers of the ministry were appointed for life, except they happened to remove from one church to another; and churches, except in cases of extreme misconduct, in a Society with a hereditary membership, will always support their *officers*, and in many cases the office itself was in practice hereditary. It may be remarked, that since the "liberty of prophesying" had been continued in this Society to a greater extent than in any other of the

churches of the Commonwealth, and any member had perfect liberty to preach in their meetings for Divine worship, it may readily be supposed that some special control was needed over the exercise of this right—but the whole of the evidence points rather to a want of confidence in their Ministers, rather than any difficulty on this head; and it will be observed that the tendency of their legislation was to limit the functions of the ministry, and to carry out the ideas of that section of the Society in the times of Fox and the early preachers, who denounced “Outward Teachers” and the Ministry as a *distinct office* in the Church. In the history of the controversy, previously described in chapters eighteen and nineteen, it will be seen that at that early period the founders of the Society were made aware of the danger of ideas which inevitably led to a repudiation by the Church of its natural and legitimate Church officers. Their theory was that God would manifest to His Church, by the bestowal of special gifts for its edification, the Church officers He had chosen, and that the Church adopted them. The slightest consideration will convince us that they were now acting contrary to their principles. They were now instituting an order of men and women to control and govern their Ministers. These new officers had not received any education which could give them greater theological knowledge. No presumption could exist of their possessing greater religious experience. The Ministers had, to say the least, made some sacrifices of their time and talents to promote the cause of Christianity and increase the number of their Church members—while, generally speaking, these men had done nothing to entitle them to the extraordinary confidence which the nature of their office implied. Surely this was to carry the revolt against the pretensions of an

irresponsible and State supported priesthood to a point never contemplated by the originators of the movement. Was not this an error on the opposite side, which, if it were generally carried out to its legitimate consequences, would lead to results sufficiently, if not equally injurious to the cause of Christ, as that which arms the Christian Minister with priestly functions? In 1783, it was suggested that the nomination of Ministers and Elders should be taken *out of the hands of the Churches*, and it was to *originate* in the Meetings of Ministers and Elders, and then to be laid before the Monthly Meeting; and that instead of being responsible to the congregation to which they belonged, the "queries," or questions of the Church to their Ministers and Elders, were *not* to be answered before *the Church to which they were officers*, but to the Quarterly Meeting, and thence to the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, and from this to the Yearly Meeting representing the Society. These changes were eventually carried out in such a way as to rob each particular meeting or congregation of the direct power of choosing Church officers who were strictly responsible to it, and who could be changed for others, or even ejected by it at will, precisely as it was satisfied or dissatisfied with their service, and with their successful or unsuccessful management of the affairs of their Church; and, therefore, while it remained a Society representative in its character, its Church officers became practically irresponsible, unless some grave offence had been committed. The membership of the Church became a strictly hereditary membership, and the lay eldership and overseership was a kind of wedge which, gradually driven home, separated the pastors and officers from their direct relation to the people. With a representative and perfectly democratic constitution, each church thus became very much

like a Constitutional State having a Parliament but *no responsible Ministry*. The Church had a semblance of liberty, but in some of the most important functions of a religious society it was comparatively powerless. From this period, the internal history of the Society of Friends is one which cannot be contemplated without feelings of sincere regret.

Nothing could now be altered or changed. A hereditary society, it was found, had hereditary views and feelings. Its principles were not generally adopted by any process of reasoning or conviction, or by the power of the Holy Spirit bringing the mind to assent to the revealed truths of Christianity. The same routine of Church Meetings, almost exclusively occupied with secular matters, tended constantly to educate a fresh generation of formalists; and the earnest and spiritually minded Christian Minister, who was anxious for the reform of the particular congregation to which he belonged, instead of being able to educate and receive as Church members a new generation of young Christian people who had been gathered and converted under his preaching, and in whom, by God's blessing, he had succeeded in implanting a higher standard of Christian action, soon found the hereditary system of membership to be essentially conservative, and that a powerful minority must always exist who clung with unreasoning tenacity to whatever happened to be the existing custom and practice, ignoring the real Christian aim of those who instituted it, although the great fundamental *principles* at stake might have been carried out in an *infinite variety of ways*. Like the gardens which were robbed of their beauty by the proscription of flowers, so the Christian ministry was reduced to a monotonous level, and less and less scope was given to individual character and special Christian gifts.

The circumstance that the Society did not provide for the

theological training of its Ministers, doubtless originally suggested the necessity of some of these arrangements. But the remarks of Wesley, in his journal, when in Scotland, upon the Presbyterian polity, will show that this acute and experienced observer detected the same points of weakness in a system which provides an elaborate theological training for its Ministers. Wesley says:—"Monday, 28th, 1759. Lodging with a sensible man, I enquired particularly into the present discipline of the Scotch parishes. In one parish, it seems, there are *twelve* Ruling Elders; in another there are *fourteen*.* And what are these?—men of great sense and deep experience? Neither one nor the other. But they are the *richest* men in the parish. And are the richest of course the best and wisest men? Does the Bible teach this? I fear not. What manner of governors then will these be? Why they are generally just as capable of governing a parish, as of commanding an army!" It should be here said, that it is expressly stated that "age and wealth" are not to be inducements to the choice of Ruling Elders in the Society of Friends, and there is nothing in the standards of the Presbyterian Church which would directly produce such a result; but what is here contended, is that Wesley's view, as to the true qualification of Church officers being the qualification of being "apt to teach," was sound and salutary, and that the objections urged long ago by John Smyth of Amsterdam, and Bishop Hall, to the principle of officering the church with those who do not "labour," or "labour very much," in word and teaching, are founded upon a just view of the nature and necessities of Christianity.—*See Appendix.*

* In one meeting of the Society of Friends, a few years ago, there were no fewer than *twenty-four* Ruling Elders, whose main duty consisted in the oversight of *three* Ministers.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXII.

BISHOP HALL, ON LAY ELDERS.

THE work by Bishop Hall, "Episcopacy by Divine Right," London, 1640, was his first work in the controversy on Episcopacy, in which Archbishop Usher was engaged, and was rendered celebrated by the publication of a pamphlet written by five of the Presbyterian or Puritan Divines, viz., Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Mathew Newcomen, and William Spurstow, and entitled "Smectymnus," a word made up of the initial letters of their names. Milton threw himself into the controversy, with his "Animadversions on the Remonstrant Defence against 'Smectymnus,'" 1641, and "An Apology for 'Smectymnus,'" 1642.

Whatever weight may be attached to Bishop Hall's defence of Episcopacy, the following remarks on the "Lay Elders" of the Presbyterian scheme of Church Government, seem well worthy of attention. Part iii., pp. 5, 4 :—"Who ever spake or heard of a Lay Presbyter in all the Church of God, until this age? Calvin himself confesses 'that the Presbyters mentioned at Ephesus, and Titus i., 5, are none others than doctors or teachers.' At page 7, he challenges the production of the name of "one Lay Presbyter that ever was in the Christian Church from the times of Christ and His Apostles, until this present age." He remarks, page 11, that the true meaning of 1st Timothy, v., 17, viz., "Let the *Elders that rule well* be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine," is "a more intense and *serious* labour in the *same office*," not "a several and distinct office;" and remarks, "Never any expositor, for fifteen hundred years after Christ, took these Presbyters to be any other than priests or ministers." Page 26, "Our late humorists give power of excommunication to every parish Presbytery." Page 27, "How is it possible that spiritual food and teaching should be severed? Who can *feed* the soul and not instruct it?" Page 28, "This is as if every child should have two nurses, one to give it the bib, another the breast; one to hold the dish, and the other to put in the spoon!" Page 29, "He sees not why these *good women*, 'the widows,' should not *put in for a share* in the parish Presbyteries, and *chide with the Elders!*"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE EFFECTS OF THE OMISSION BY THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE SYSTEMATIC READING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN PUBLIC WORSHIP. SECULARIZATION OF THE NEW-ENGLAND THEOCRACY BY THE ADMISSION OF "NOMINAL" OR "POLITICAL" MEMBERS, SIMILAR IN ITS EFFECTS TO THE INTRODUCTION OF "BIRTHRIGHT MEMBERSHIP" AMONG THE "FRIENDS." RECAPITULATION OF THE EFFECT OF THEIR INTERNAL LEGISLATION. ACKWORTH SCHOOL FOUNDED. WHITFIELD'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. THEIR PART IN THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY. THEIR ADVOCACY OF THE LANCASTERIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM, PRISON REFORMATION, THE AMELIORATION OF THE CRIMINAL CODE, AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY. THE SOCIETY DECREASES RAPIDLY IN NUMBERS DURING THIS PERIOD.

IT may be inquired, how was it that a Church, whose founders considered that "this way of religion" was "according to the Scriptures, and in the fulfilling of them in doctrine, practice, and conversation," and that "the ministry, ordinances, Church government and discipline" of the early Society were "in the same power and Spirit, and by the example of the Apostles," could wander so far from scriptural precedent as to its membership and Church officers? Owing to the circumstances described in the earlier portion of these pages, the practical exclusion of the reading of the New Testament Scriptures in the congregation had been handed down from the period of John

Smyth, of Amsterdam. Its origin was a reaction against a liturgy, whose use was forced upon unwilling worshippers. This reaction swept away in its violence that most salutary practice of the Church of England, the *systematic* reading of the Holy Scriptures. We have before observed * that its omission in meetings for public worship was not peculiar to the Society of Friends till the middle of the eighteenth century. This omission of the systematic reading of the Holy Scriptures in the church, among the Friends, gradually produced important consequences. As far as the duty of the frequent private and family reading of the Holy Scriptures was concerned, probably the members of few churches were more exemplary; but the effect of this was simply to call their attention to their *private* duty as Christians, while those portions of the New Testament which relate to the membership and the officers of the Christian Church, and to the duties of the Church in a corporate capacity, were overlooked.

A curious historical parallel to the position in which the Society of Friends was now placed by the adoption of an hereditary membership, is found in the state of the semi-congregational churches in Massachusetts, formed by a kind of compromise between the purely Independent Church system of John Robinson and the Pilgrim Fathers, and the ideas of the Presbyterian or Puritan refugees from persecution in England. These were the Churches who persecuted the Friends and Baptists, and whose principles led them to desire liberty of conscience for themselves, but not for those who differed from them. In the fearful persecutions of the Friends and Baptists, in New England, the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers appear to have had

* See pages 401 to 403.

little part ; and such part as the colony of Plymouth took, must be laid not to John Robinson's principles, but to the way in which the Independents became gradually incorporated with the Boston State Church Government.* The New England churches were in name Independent, but they were not the exponents of pure Independency, but of the views of the *Puritan* portion of the Anglican Church. They endeavoured, as we have already explained, to carry out Calvin's idea of a theocracy. They enacted that "none should have *the rights of freemen who were not members of some regularly established Church.*" This, we are told, "continually exerted a secularising influence in regard to religion, on the minds of the truly pious, by causing a religious character and profession *to be habitually viewed as a means of enjoying civil privileges.*"

"In the next place, notwithstanding the strictness of the examination of candidates for church privileges at that period (about 1662), there can be no doubt that the regulation brought into the Church numbers, continually increasing, who entered it, not from a simple regard to the institutions of Christ and the welfare of His spiritual kingdom, but from selfish and mercenary motives—for the sake of secular advantages connected with Church membership :"

* The Independent Churches at Plymouth appear, to a considerable extent, to have maintained their principles. Edward Winslow says, in 1646, that they "do not exercise the civil sword against those who differ from them, if Christian in their life," but against "evil doers," and not against "tender consciences, who follow the light of God's Word.—"Hypocrisy Unmasked," London, p. 101. But they appear, even at this period, to be wavering, and Edward Winslow complains "that the government of Plymouth, to our great grief, have *only* stirred up the *Elders of the Church to deal with a pastor*"—and "divers of his congregation who approve the said pastor"—"who waiveth the administration of baptism to infants." In 1656, the Plymouth authorities made a law, that every person who entertains Quakers is to be fined £5, or to be whipped at Plymouth. In 1658, Culworth and Hatherley, magistrates at Scituate, *entertained Quakers and were deposed.* In 1659, the Plymouth people were not severe.—See Bowden's "History of American Friends."

and the result was that, "the religion of the heart" was more and more "neglected;" the means of grace were applied with less and less fidelity, and the influences of the Spirit were withdrawn." They had originally two classes of members, nominal or political members, and "qualified members;" but the effect was, that "the nominal or simply political members gained the ascendency."^{*} Mather says that, "if the apostacy should proceed as fast for the next thirty years as it has done the last, surely it will come to this, that in New England the most conscientious people therein will think themselves to *gather churches out of churches!*" It will be seen that the strictness of their views respecting Church membership, was in this case broken down by the political necessities of the country absolutely requiring that persons not ready to take up their membership in the churches, should not be *disfranchised* as respects their *civil rights*; and rather than give up their idea of a practical Theocracy, and the *complete identity* of Church and State, they were compelled to connive at the introduction of improperly qualified Church members, till their Church membership became practically a birthright.

The same position of affairs was brought about in the Society of Friends by widely different means; but the secularization was effected on a principle substantially the same.

The Kingdom of Christ being represented on earth by the *Church*, and the Church being competent to exercise all the *secular government needful to Christians*, who could refrain from desiring that "the seed of the faithful" should be early brought under so desirable a government? In the

* Wisner, quoted by Dr. Waddington.—See "Congregational History," pp. 654, 655.

case of the Society of Friends, *all who were born into it* became eventually entitled to the civil privileges of the theocracy, while, at the same time, strong motives existed for the expulsion of the unworthy. In the New England theocracy the tendency was to diminish a dissatisfied class, who, while they remained excluded from membership, were debarred *the privileges of citizenship*, to the injury of the State, and to render the Church co-extensive with the State, by the comprehension of persons *worthy* to possess *State rights*, but *unworthy* to be received as *Church members*. They thus endeavoured to make the Church and the State co-extensive. The same result was virtually attempted to be accomplished, by the institution of "Birthright Membership," combined with a careful religious training, in the Society of Friends.

The course of events in the Society of Friends, up to this period, may be therefore briefly recapitulated. First, the application of a wise and salutary Church government to matters *purely civil and beyond its province*, and the prominence thereby given to *secular* gifts in contradistinction to purely *Christian* gifts—"gifts of grace." Secondly, the non-adoption of the practice of our Lord and the Primitive Church (which the Society professed to copy) of the *public* reading of the Holy Scriptures in the church. By this accidental omission in their polity, encouragement was given to a purely mystical tendency to press the true and scriptural doctrine of the personal teaching of the Holy Spirit beyond the limits assigned to it in Holy Scripture. Not only was Christ in the Person of the Holy Ghost believed in as a real Teacher, Guide, and Comforter, dwelling in the heart of the Christian, and also from time to time appearing in the hearts of the ungodly as the "Light of the world," and the "Light of life" to lead them to heaven, but he was declared to be a

teacher of those things outwardly revealed in Holy Scripture, which Christ had already personally taught and committed to Christian *men* to teach; but a contrast was drawn between the "teaching of *men*" and the teaching of "God alone." In words this resembled the utterances of the Early Friends, but was in meaning diametrically opposite. In the one case, it was the denial of the necessity of *all human teaching*, which necessarily destroyed the importance of the ministry of the Gospel, and led to the depreciation of *all human learning*. In the other case, that of the Early Friends, it was the denial of the Christian "gift of teaching" to *unregenerate men*.

The omission of the practice of the reading of Holy Scripture in the Church, tended also to cause the full acknowledgment of the Christian gift of "teaching" by the founders of the Society* to be forgotten. The gift of prophesying, or speaking to the edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers, under those warm feelings of Christian love, which from time to time the Holy Spirit raises in the hearts of Christians towards Christians, was at last looked upon as the *only true ministry* under the Gospel dispensation. The denial of the gift of teaching, or the declaration of the nature of the Christian religion to the world, by those who felt they were called by God to the work, necessarily followed. Under these circumstances, less and less attention to the close study of the Holy Scriptures was given by the ministers† of the Society, while the question, whether it was the will of the Holy Spirit that they should preach at *a particular*

* See p. 435.

† They were advised, in 1728, to "keep to the form of sound words, or Scripture terms, and that none pretend to be wise above that which is written; and in such pretended wisdom, go about to explain the things of God."

moment, assumed increasing importance.* Hence arose preaching, which was spoken of by the Church itself as that which was calculated to bring Christianity into “contempt.” The amount of preaching was thus necessarily reduced to a minimum.

The object of Fox had been to extend and develope a system which should provide for the utmost possible extension of lay preaching, and its organization and distribution after the fashion of a Methodist “plan.” The withdrawal of the Society from its position of a Home Missionary Church was seen to be necessary, when Ministers, who held that they were sent of God to preach His Gospel, no longer reflected the same credit upon their holy calling which they did in earlier times.†

We have seen that the measures taken to remedy the evil were two-fold. The first was the exercise of a minute, doctrinal, and practical oversight of the Ministers by a class of officers developed by a Church which legislated elaborately upon civil matters. The particular churches then abandoned without a struggle, to a large extent, both the choice and the control of their Ministers. Instead of either putting confidence in their legitimate Church officers, whom they

* Such was the development of the idea of a “prophetic” ministry, that in the year 1750, in a work written expressly for the instruction of young ministers, the following description of a minister’s duty is given:—“Now, a spiritual minister is, and ought every day to be, like *blank paper*, when he comes into the assembly of the Lord’s people.” “The danger of *borrowing* may lie as near, respecting the *Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments*, as with any other book that may affect our minds, as what we have before heard,” i.e., from other ministers. “For it is no more lawful for us to preach what we have read, because we have read it, than it is for us to preach what we have heard because we have heard it.”—“A Description of the Qualifications of a Gospel Minister,” by Samuel Bownas. This minister states elsewhere that he once took out his Bible at a public meeting, and was astonished at the good effect it had on his hearers.

† See pp. 526, 530, and 531.

held to be called of God, or superseding them, they trusted a class of persons who had neither greater knowledge, greater spiritual gifts, nor greater zeal for the propagation of the Christian religion to oversee them, and with results which may be described as simply disastrous. We have seen that this Church commenced with a scriptural and rational system of membership, which was maintained with the utmost strictness. The practical maintenance, however, of a *secular government*, taking cognizance of the minutest matters, not only robbed this of its spiritual significance, but led to a *secular definition of membership*, and eventually to a Birthright Membership, which made the Friends, according to the definition of one of the founders of their Body, only "a part of the World" separated by education and peculiar usages. They were no longer persons who professed that their "Faith stood in the power of God;" that they were "in possession" of this "Gospel" by true conversion of heart, and had become members of a particular Christian Society, because they wished harmoniously to propagate the Christian religion, and to uphold the New Testament ideal of a working Church, showing forth the practical effects of the Christian religion in its spirituality, purity and power. A Birthright Membership led to a widely-spread weakness and corruption. They endeavoured to remedy this, *not* by Christian teaching in the way Christ had expressly commanded, but on the one hand by strictly expelling all those who were disorderly walkers; those who married out of the Society, and those persons who did not exactly comply with the rules of the Church; and on the other by giving a sound secular and religious education (as far as it was possible in the nature of things for the Society to enforce it) to every child who was deemed a member of the Society. The necessary effect of these measures was—